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THE BOOKMAN

THE CASE OF THANATOPSIS

By May Lamberton Becker

We believe that the literary clubs, small and large, throughout the country, are endeavoring to keep pace with the development of American literature. For this reason, we have asked May Lamberton Becker, of the staff of "The Literary Review", to write a series of papers on the club program. In connection with this series, and with later papers on similar subjects, and in cooperation with the Extension Division of the New York Public Library, we are inaugurating a new Service for Literary Clubs. The editor of THE BOOKMAN *and his advisers and associates will answer promptly and to the best of their ability, any question confronting any literary club. Such questions should be addressed "*THE BOOKMAN *Literary Club Service".*

Commencing with the August number of THE BOOKMAN *a series of club programs will be announced. These programs will be supplemented by essays and bibliographies on the subjects involved. Various other magazines have promised to cooperate with us in publishing correlated articles. These programs will be formed not by the editors of this magazine, but by a board of advice which is now being formed and which will include names from various lines of literary thought in America, so that the result will represent no one group: such names as Mary Austin, Hamlin Garland, Carl Van Doren, Kenneth Macgowan, Gertrude Atherton, Burton Rascoe, William Lyon Phelps, Ludwig Lewisohn, etc., etc. We believe that this service and these programs will give to our readers, whether or not they be club members, a clear understanding both of the history and the present current of American writing. We take pleasure in announcing further a* BOOKMAN *Bureau of Lecturers. This will enable the small literary club to obtain excellent speakers at moderate rates.*

THE most successful club program I know anything about was carried out last year by one of the drama study clubs that function in such numbers the country over. This one has, however, at least one distinguishing characteristic; the oldest member is well over eighty, the leader seventy-five, and most of the others are grandmothers, and not these premature grandmothers either. Some eight years since, they formed a group to read aloud the plays of Ibsen, for the sole and excellent reason that they wanted to read the plays of Ibsen, and when they had read them all but "Emperor and Galilean" they kept on reading modern plays, two acts at a time with the rest of the morning for discussion, once a week. In this time they had read and talked over most of the more

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significant contemporary plays, and were by last year at something of a standstill. Then they had the bright idea of, so to speak, pooling their memories. If they had not been determined theatregoers, they had at least made part of many audiences over a long time, and had watched great actors now but great names; moreover, they were still attending plays with reasonable frequency. The six oldest members took charge each of a month, opening it with a paper or a talk, whichever came easiest: one had "Plays I Remember", and for the rest of the month the members read those plays; one, "Actors I Remember", with the plays in which she recalled them; another, "Actresses I Remember"—this included Charlotte Cushman; one chose "Operas I Remember", with the readings from the books or plays on which the librettos were constructed. The leader started the program with a paper made out of Hornblow's "History of the Theatre in America", bringing the story of our stage from its beginnings to the point where the memories of the oldest member took it up, and the plays for that month were early examples like "The Contrast" or "Fashion", from the collections of Mr. Moses or Mr. Quinn.

There was no question of the success of this program. The members could not be kept away from the meetings. It must have been a good one in itself, too, apart from the way it was carried out, for though the club permits no visitors—"We couldn't talk to an audience, but we can say anything to each other"—I have never told anyone as much as I have here set down without being asked if it were not in some way possible to get within earshot. It has that fortunate combination, a subject of general interest discussed from the standpoint of personal experience; all the reactions recorded in the papers were first-hand. That the ladies were well educated and of mature intelligence was all the better, but the main thing was that they said what they thought and told what they had seen. I will listen gladly and with profit when a woman who may believe herself uneducated tells me honestly what she thinks about some recent novel, but I cannot get interested in what I recognize as her idea of what Heywood Broun thought about it.

This brings us, walking backward, to the Thanatopsis Club, the "cozy group" that put the women of Gopher Prairie "in touch with all the intellectual thoughts that are going on everywhere". It does not dispose of Thanatopsis to call it a caricature, or even an unflattering portrait of some special group. Just as "Main Street" is a composite photograph, not of our civilization, but of certain undeniable defects in our civilization, so the Thanatopsis Club is a composite photograph of certain defects possible to such clubs anywhere and found in enough of them to handicap and even somewhat to discredit an institution peculiar to our civilization and contributing greatly to its development—the study club for women as we know it in the United States, especially in the smaller cities and towns. The effect of reading about it may be the same as that produced by reading "Main Street" in general. "Main Street" induces first a violent dissent; it shoots a hole straight through local pride, and passionate and aggressive local pride has been one of the strongest and most valuable forces in the development of this our country. This dissent expresses itself in discussions with anyone who will

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listen, in which the reader maintains that the whole book is false, but in the course of which he finds himself granting that every word spoken in it he has heard someone say, and that everything that happens in it he knows has happened somewhere,—of course not in his own home town. At this point the more thoughtful citizen begins to wonder whether local pride as an agent of progress may not by this time largely have fulfilled its mission, and whether it may not be unsanitary as well as poetic to look straight at a garbage pile and see a rising city. So the thoughtful member of say the Smithville Woman's Club, having recognized in Thanatopsis certain features of the adjacent Brownsville and Jonesville organizations, may ask herself if these do not arise from recognizable and curable defects that would cripple the Anyville Woman's Club. For Thanatopsis, that might have been a centre of sweetness and light as so many little clubs are centres, reveals in the course of one meeting why it failed. It was superficial and it was insincere. A club can be almost anything else and function, but these two things mean dry rot.

Its program shows this, even without the papers. The program is at the heart of success for the club in the small community. For that matter it is anywhere, but I am at present concerned less with the large city club where various departments carry on each its own line of activity, than with those where most of the members attend most of the meetings and where a program, arranged by a committee and issued in the fall, indicates the scope of its interests for the year. I speak of these because I have an acquaintance with more of them, perhaps, than most women have who are not club members. I belong to no club for the same reason that keeps other working women from attending meetings that take place at three o'clock in the afternoon; but as the department of "The Literary Review" of which I have been for some years in charge exists to advise correspondents on the choice of books for any purpose, and as from the first it has been called on to assist in the choice of those from which club programs were to be made or material for club papers obtained, I have been consulted by clubs from Oregon to Florida, from New York to New Mexico. Sometimes they send back the resulting program; more often I know they have found what they wanted only because they come back next year. As they have been coming in ever-increasing numbers I have had a somewhat unusual opportunity to see how much the same problems face program makers the country over, and how certain general principles are of use to those who have in hand so important a task. For it is one of real importance; the more I know of the work of women's clubs, the more I respect them, always for their ambitions, often for their accomplishments.

The choice of the subject has so much to do with the program that though it can fail with a good subject it cannot succeed with a poor one. A good one means one in which the greater number of the members are, or can be brought to be, interested. That is, it must be within the range of their experience or of their aspirations, preferably of both. That is why the drama club is so popular in cities, the travel club where there are farmers' wives. A club exists—and this is a statement important enough to read carefully—so that a

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number of women working together can accomplish something that no one of them could bring about, working alone; whatever one woman can do better by herself a club has no business to spend its time upon. Making a program, then, is based on two principles, division of labor and sharing of profits, and it is the duty of the program maker so to assign the papers and so to limit the scope of each one that the woman presenting it can make a careful and reasonably thorough report. Pooling these reports, each member finds herself at the close of the year with some special information on at least one phase of the subject—her own paper—and a pretty good idea of where this fits into the subject in general. Many college students get no more from a semester: some have been known to come away with less.

The stages of preparing a program are like the processes involved in threading the traffic of a crowded street—you first determine the direction in which you are to go, and the spot on the other side that you intend to reach; this settled, you devote all your attention to the six inches immediately in front of you. Take the case of the club studying some department of literature, because there are so many of these. Suppose it elects, as being nearer the interests and experience of the members, to study American literature. A club of some years' standing has no doubt done so already; if it has not and wishes to do so, let its members examine Barrett Wendell's "Literary History of America", of which the chapter headings suggested groupings of authors for the greater part of the program of one club, and the text suggested the subjects for papers and the material for illustration. But this was some years since, and clubs tend more to narrow their programs, say to a study of American fiction. Here, if the committee wishes a tentative plan from which to work out a well proportioned program, it may work from the table of contents of Carl Van Doren's "The American Novel", which is not a manual for club study, but a book for the general reader, a "chapter in the history of the American imagination".

1. The Beginnings of Fiction.
2. James Fenimore Cooper.
3. Romances of Adventure.
4. Nathaniel Hawthorne.
5. Blood and Tears.
6. Howells and Realism.
7. Mark Twain.
8. Henry James.
9. The Eighties and their Kin.
10. Reaction and Progress.

This looks like a program for ten meetings, but reading the book reveals that the writers of the "great decade" spread over more meetings than No. 9. Of course this does not include present-day writers. But the arrangement of the book helps materially in the arrangement of the program. Or take American humor, which I am forced to say was taken up in a serious way—Hermione is a handicap to anyone who wants to talk about clubs at all—by one committee. For it worried lest the program—which ranged from Franklin through Ward and Twain and Stockton and Bunner, and could have had a wonderful time, had the books been out then, with "The Cruise of the Kawa" and Mr. Stewart's invaluable "Parody Outline of History"—might not be too lightminded for a study club. I assured the committee that our humorists have been the most subtle historians of our manners, morals, customs, and ideals, and that if this idea were kept at the back of the brain through the course it would afford not only a unifying thought for

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the program, but a satisfactory reason for having a thoroughly good time. The literature section of another club spent a season on "Heroines in Fiction". The first one was "Pamela"; a brief sketch of Richardson, a synopsis of the story, and a paper on what according to this book were the ethics of being a woman at this time, made the first half of the meeting, and a similar treatment of Fielding's "Amelia" made the second half. The earlier subjects were taken from Howells's selections for his "Heroines of Fiction"; but from the entrance of Lily Bart on the program they came from novels whose leading women had convinced the committee that they were undeniably real and reasonably typical, like Ellen Glasgow's "Virginia". If that course were going on this year, what a time the committee would have among the heroines of "Elizabeth" and the ladies of "Dangerous Ages", and those to whom we have been introduced by Elisabeth Sanxay Holding — not to forget those contributed by the earnest Englishmen who are so sure they know all about women.

When I was in high school we founded the first girls' club to last out a year there; I hope that one reason why it has lasted twenty-five may be because we fixed two traditions: that no "reading" of prose or verse should be taken from a book of selections, but should be, so to say, served from the original package; the other, that anyone presenting a review or criticism of a book should be prepared to furnish infrangible proof of having read it. If she then chose to lift some noble thoughts about it from the printed works of more professional thinkers, well and good, but she must be in a position to know whether she agreed with them or not. I tell this because it gives me a chance to indicate what seems to me the chief value of works of criticism to the program maker. A club paper should set down what the writer really thinks, but a professional critic may set her to thinking. The best critic for the program maker to read is one who not only introduces her to authors, but arouses in her a determination to read everything they have written. James Gibbons Huneker was like that. Criticism has been growing ever more like that since it permitted itself to be the adventure of the soul among masterpieces. J. C. Squire, in his "Life and Letters" or the earlier "Books in General", not only himself adventures, but shoves the soul of his reader off the branch to try a flight of its own. Single reviews often indicate lines of study of which the program maker may avail herself. When Lafcadio Hearn's "Japanese Letters" appeared, the "North American" said that they could be reviewed from three standpoints: as the record of a beautiful suffering soul, as a contribution to literary criticism, and as a record of oriental modes of life and thought. There is a plan for the discussion of this book—or an idea for a convenient threefold division of a meeting devoted to Hearn.

There are of course many books prepared especially for club use; with these I am not at present concerned, nor am I in general greatly interested in them. It will be remembered that the Gopher Prairie club functioned with the aid of literature created for its uses alone. Some books, like Blanche Colton Williams's "Our Short Story Writers", no doubt had club use in mind in their arrangement, but are, like that work, good reading anyway, stimulating and informing. We are beginning to be

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supplied with books containing information about living writers, even those not yet filling much space in "Who's Who", and if publishers knew how often I am asked questions like, "Where can I find out something about the author of 'Scaramouche'?", "Who is Virginia Woolf and what else has she written?", "Where has Cunninghame-Graham been living to write like that?", there might be more books to satisfy this legitimate curiosity. Some, indeed, there are; a literature department would do well, for instance, to keep at hand Manly and Rickert's "Contemporary British Literature: Bibliographies and Study Outlines", which lists some two hundred authors and gives the works of each, with generally enough biography to place him. A couple of English books, "Some Contemporary Novelists", by R. Brimley Johnson, deal with the newer writers, especially the one about women, and "Modern Men and Mummers", by Hesketh Pearson, published earlier in the season in England, has just been brought out here; this is a sort of "Mirrors of Downing Street" for men of letters and art, often flippant, sometimes, in its own words, "expanded with self-importance", but provocative—a trait valuable to the program maker—and, in some chapters, with information not elsewhere found. This is not a book list, or I could name more of these books that help the committee to lay out paths through new scenery.

The same principles of division of labor and sharing of profits apply to the making of programs on the fine arts or history, or the combination of the two carried out by a southern club this year with a program on cathedrals, English, French, and Italian. They chose their subjects with the help of such books as E. B. O'Reilly's "How France Built Her Cathedrals", or the series by T. F. Bumpus that includes "Cathedrals of England and Wales", buying as many well illustrated volumes as possible and circulating them, for there is no local library. The drama class of a New England summer resort village laid the foundations of an excellent drama section in the local library by depositing year by year the books used in the winter season. An understanding with the library, always valuable, is at its best when on a give and take basis.

I have spoken of the choice of books as if they were the only help available to the program maker. Of course some clubs can have the personal advice of specialists in the direction of their study. I have heard of one that listens to an address by some visiting authority four times a year, spending the interval in preparation for the lecture. I was the speaker at the closing meeting of a club this spring and found it had been going all winter on the momentum acquired at the opening meeting from an address by William Lyon Phelps. In one city I lecture every other week on contemporary literature before this department of a large and keen-minded club, and in the alternate week nine study circles meet to read and discuss what I have suggested. But in the main it is on books that the program committee, especially in smaller places, must rely. These reports from the field may show some of the ways in which study clubs are using them.

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DADAISM

By Albert Schinz

HAVE you heard of the dance invented by Marinetti, the Futurist,—the dance of the aviator? The ballerina is placed on a huge geographical map, violently colored. She must then figure a never interrupted palpitating of wings. On her breast, instead of flowers, is a large propeller made of celluloid. She has a white face, and her hat is in the form of a monoplane. The first "movement" is as follows: "She is stretched out on her stomach, imitating the motion of a flying machine just about to leave the ground; then she will run swiftly on all fours; then she will bound. . ." Marinetti came specially to Paris to introduce the aviator dance, as well as the shrapnel dance and the machine gun dance.

Do you know the secret of Marinetti's rushing to Paris? Simply because something had happened which threatens to sweep out of existence Cubism and Futurism itself. Marinetti had to do something to save his reputation and regain public attention. But is it possible to outdo Cubism and Futurism? Some say so. Certainly the adepts of the new school of Dada think so.

Very shortly after the armistice, i.e., as soon as it became possible to be interested again in anything else but the war, these words, *Dada* and *Dadaism*, found their way into the papers. True, Dadaist art and literature appeared so absurd that there was no doubt that the theory would pass away very rapidly. But no. In the last two years it has forced itself more and more on public attention. Even such men as J. H. Rosny, André Gide, Jacques Rivière (the editor of the "Nouvelle Revue Française"), have looked into it and discussed it.

About all that is known concerning the beginnings of Dadaism is that it grew out of meetings held as far back as 1916 at the Café Voltaire, on the Zeltweg in Zurich, by a group who apparently were unaware that a war was going on. So when the armistice came and people were again thirsting for some artistic life, there was not much competition and Dadaism stood a good chance of winning. Thus its founders offered their wares to the world.

Their leader is a man who goes by the name of Tristan Tzara. Is this his real name? Of course not. Is he a Frenchman? There are all sorts of reasons for believing not; you may choose to consider him Rumanian, Swiss, Bulgarian, Pole, Czecho-Slovak . . . some even whisper that he is a German. Is he handsome, vigorous, or dreadful-looking? Heavens, all the poetry would be absent if he were not a young, timid, bashful creature; he must have blue eyes and a blond mane.

The Dadaists published a "Bulletin Dada" with a manifesto which, although it was a *"proclamation sans prétention"*, indicated that they proposed to put all the former schools—especially Cubism and Futurism—out of business. The title of their pa-

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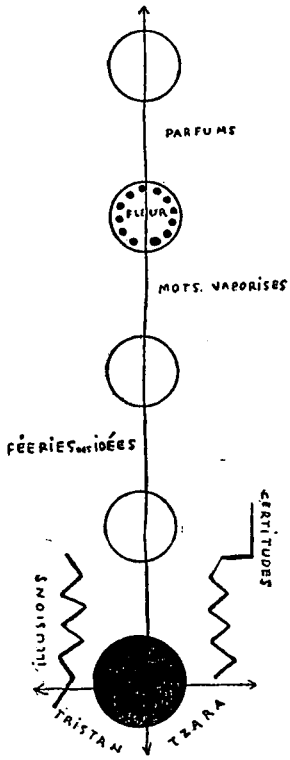
per was later changed to "Cannibale".

While they could boast only of an international following—not a particularly large one—they were not,

Portrait de TRISTAN TZARA
par
FRANCIS PICABIA



Reprinted from "Cannibale"

however, discouraged and they decided to go to Paris. There on the fifth of February, 1920, they announced a great meeting at the Grand Palais des Champs Elysées. The program of the meeting was as follows:

Francis Picabia.
Manifesto read by ten people.
Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes.
Manifesto read by nine people.
André Breton.
Manifesto read by eight people.
Paul Dermée.
Manifesto read by seven people.
Paul Eluard.
Manifesto read by six people.
Louis Aragon.
Manifesto read by five people.
Tristan Tzara.
Manifesto read by four people and a journalist.

This program was gravely carried out.

Then they organized various picture exhibitions, and also meetings in order to read their work *"en patois Dada"*, to the accompaniment of "a frenzied jazz band". The most famous of their pictures is one by Marcel Duchamp. He took a print of the Mona Lisa, put a Kaiser mustache under her smile, and exhibited it. Another artist spilled some ink on a large sheet of paper and called it the Virgin Mary. The picture of Tristan Tzara here reproduced is the work of Francis Picabia, the right arm of the Master.

The writer wishes he could summarize one of their plays, "Vous m'oublierez", by two illustrious Dadaists, Breton and Soupault, the characters of which are a bathrobe, an umbrella, and a sewing machine; the most thrilling scene represents the sewing machine kissing the bathrobe on its forehead. But it might overtax the patience of the reader.

Here are three samples of their poetry. The first one consists of a succession of syllables without any meaning in French or probably, in any language. Thus it has the advantage of requiring no translation. It is called "Coeur de Jesus", by Francis Picabia:

Jardi me cha vide
Plu cuses vi gent re
Jan este oses cine resses
Brul ille mor gnée sui
Avo alon allu udon
Cur emblés chi tite pord
Porch raient couro satis chrét
Son terrés, eff Teprie sa

The second, by Louis Aragon, is called "Suicide":

A b c d e f
g h i k l
m n o p q r
s t u v w
x y z

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The third, "Paroxysme", was published by Pierre Chapka-Bonnière:

PAROXYSME

— — — — — o—O
!!! tsi—i—i—I
—et sam — et sam— sam —a M
—et sam—et sam— sam —a M.
? oha —Keink — —tsi H.
! rrroor — O
—atakak —af—oh—tzzi g.

Should you inquire what all this means you are referred to the great manifesto by Tristan Tzara—mostly meaningless to common mortals except perhaps for a few characteristic sentences:

. . . I write a manifesto and I want nothing; however I say certain things and I am in principle against manifestoes; and I am also against principles; . . . I write this manifesto in order to show that one can do at the same time two actions entirely opposed to each other in one fresh breathing; I am against action; for never ceasing contradiction; for affirmation, too; I am neither for nor against, and I do not explain, for I hate sense.

DADA—this is the word which takes ideas on a hunt. . . .

DADA means nothing

. . . . . .

We want works, straightforward, strong, accurate and forever not understood. Logic is a complication. Logic is always wrong. . .

The divine thing with us is the awakening of anti-human action. Morality means infusion of chocolate in the veins of all men. . .

The reader may ask: is this not a huge *fumisterie*, as the French call it?

The writer replies: by no means. The movement is absolutely sound. This is just the right time for the world to get a healthful thoroughgoing purge. This pushing to the extreme of the modern fad for so-called novelty and originality which degenerated into eccentricity and insanity, is just what will do it, and bring the artistic world back to its senses. There are very good reasons to believe that this is exactly what the leaders of the Dadaists have in mind. And if they do not *mean* it so, can we not *take* it so?

THE NEW WHISTLE

By Witter Bynner

SEE him cut a whistle
Not like the rest—
Yours is easy, mine is stupid,
His is the best.
He lets the hole come anywhere,
He makes the pipe long,
He ties a berry on the end
Before he plays the song. . . . .
There he has cut his whistle
And is ready—so—
Not for you to listen
But just to watch him blow.

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CONTEMPORARY ALFREDS

By Donald Ogden Stewart

II: ALFRED SWIFT

With a Sketch by Herb Roth

am not really a humorist."

It was a curious remark for Alfred Swift to make. I scented a joke. I didn't know Swift very well; but I scented a joke. I had been fooled before by these humorists with their "serious statements". It always seemed to me a rather poor way to get a laugh. I don't like practical jokes. And I don't like the humorist who leads you into a serious discussion only to wriggle out with a laugh—at your expense.

"I am not really a humorist."

Swift *was* a humorist. At least, he was rapidly acquiring a literary reputation as such. And I liked Swift—what little I had seen of him. I liked him well enough to wish that he wouldn't try to "kid" me. Our acquaintanceship had not really reached the "kidding" stage—especially as I was somewhat older than he. Besides, he was my guest. It was really quite fresh of Swift to begin his luncheon with a joke on his host. One usually felt out one's ground a little—especially with an older man. I was a little disappointed.

Of course there was the possibility that Swift was not trying to be funny with me at all. Certainly he did not, at this particular moment, look like a humorist. His thin face had on it that expression which I have observed men often adopt when they are listening to a recitation of "Gunga Din" or a red seal graphophone record. I had seen that same pathetic look recently somewhere else—neither in a vaudeville theatre nor a drawing room. Where? I remembered—with a smile. It was at a dinner party. I glanced hastily at Swift's plate. But no—his oysters were untouched. Swift, his oyster fork held limply in his hand, was gazing sadly out of the window.

It was a melancholy day. The late fall days usually are. There is something about the approach of winter that induces a rather pleasant indulgence in the "blues". At least I enjoy it, with somewhat the same pleasure with which I listen in a cabaret to old waltzes. The pleasurable enjoyment of vague indefinite sorrow for vague indefinite lost things—it is an autumn emotion. I fell for a minute into Swift's mood. It was pleasant, sitting up in the many mirrored dining room of the Croton Club, to look down over the city. It was warm in the Croton Club; it was cold in the city. Snow—the first snow—was drifting down. Drifting—

"I am not really a humorist."

What did the young man want? Was he merely fishing for praise? Certainly he had been told often enough, in the past two months, that "Blaa!" was one of the funniest books of the year

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and that its author was a humorist "of the first water"—whatever, as one reviewer had said, that may mean. I had enjoyed "Blaa!". And having met the author several times I had asked him to have lunch with me. And here we were. Or where were we?

I had had enough experience with literary people to know that there is often a sad discrepancy between the author and his work. My constant and enthusiastic companion on my excursion to all available prizefights, for example, is the man who makes his living by writing children's bedtime stories; the one occasion in my life when I was overwhelmed with perfumery and disgust was when talking—for the first and last time—to the author who has gained a fortune as the writer of what are described as "red-blooded stories for red-blooded men". Still more recently I had read of the marital difficulties — excessive cruelty, drunkenness, infidelity, etc.—of one of our leading "poets of the hearth and home". But Alfred Swift's case was somewhat different. Here was a young man on the threshold of what promised to be a great career gazing sad-eyed out of the window and telling me that he wasn't something everyone was praising him for being. It occurred to me that perhaps the fellow was merely modest. Sincerely modest. It was a new trait to discover in an author. Still, Alfred was quite young . . . . and he hadn't been an author long.

"The chicken hash here is delicious," I suggested. "And I recommend the pumpkin pie." I handed him the menu card with a smile. He glanced at it and returned it. He also returned the smile. That was one of the things I liked about Swift. He seemed such a perfectly responsive young fellow. He actually appeared to be aware of the existence of other human beings. On the few occasions I had seen him I had been impressed with the fact that here was an author who didn't insist on dominating the canvas with his own personality, his own mood. He was sensitive to the desires of others.

"I'll take the chicken hash", he said, "and the pumpkin pie." He was silent for a moment—then he added, "You don't believe me, do you?"

I laughed. "Believe you?" I said. "I believe you so much that I'm going to order the same thing myself. Henry"—it somehow pleases me immensely to call the older Croton Club waiters by their first names. And Henry has been with the club a long time—"Henry, bring us two orders of chicken hash. And Henry, I want you to bring this gentleman the largest piece of pumpkin pie you have ever served in eighteen years."

"Nineteen," corrected Henry; "nineteen, sir, last month." Dates are Henry's hobby. "Will you have coffee with your lunch or—?"

I looked at Swift. Swift looked at me.

"Demitasse," I said.

"Demitasse," said Swift.

"Yes sir," said Henry, disappearing toward the kitchen with our empty oyster dishes.

When I glanced at Swift again, he was once more gazing out of the window. I offered him a cigarette.

"You really don't believe me, do you?" he said.

He seemed somewhat embarrassed. He grew even more embarrassed when he discovered that he had taken what he thought was my last cigarette. He refused to light it until I had produced another box.

"I ought to be ashamed of myself

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for smoking such cheap cigarettes," I said, avoiding his question, but 'de gustibus—'"

"I like them," said Swift. He was silent. He seemed to be waiting for me to say something.

"That last thing of yours in 'Vogue'," I began.

"'Vanity Fair'," corrected Swift, somewhat defiantly.

"'Vanity Fair'," I agreed—"was wonderful. It was a scream. I was almost put off a street car for laughing so loudly. I'm sure they thought I was crazy."

Swift blushed. "I'm glad you liked it," he said.

"Liked it," I cried; "why Swift if you can keep on, it won't be long before they'll begin comparing you to Irvin Cobb—"

I remember that when a boy I once, at the suggestion of another boy, called an Italian fruit dealer a certain name, of the meaning of which I was then and am to this day in complete ignorance. The result, however, surprised and bewildered me. And so, at this precise moment, did Swift.

"Cobb!" said he. "Oh my God."

"Why yes," I replied; "what's the matter? Cobb is certainly one of our leading humorists."

"Yes," said Alfred—somewhat bitterly, I thought; "Cobb is certainly one of our leading humorists."

"Well then—man alive", I said, "I should think that you would feel pretty complimented at being mentioned with him—"

Henry and chicken hash interrupted us.

"It's early for snow, isn't it Henry?" I remarked.

"Yes sir," said Henry. "We didn't have any last year until the first of December. You remember of course, sir, the big storm that day?"

"I certainly do," I replied.

"I think", said Swift, "that your big storm was on November thirtieth. In fact, I'm sure of it."

It was an unexpected contradiction. I writhed, for an instant, internally. Henry is extremely sensitive about his memory for dates. But he is also, above everything else, a waiter. He is proud of his calling. And a good waiter never argues.

"Yes sir," said Henry, but addressing me. "Yes sir."

He left us with great dignity. I felt a certain resentment against my guest.

"I'm afraid I've hurt his feelings," said he. "I hate to hurt people's feelings." My resentment vanished. Once more it came home to me that Swift was possessed of a remarkably appreciative regard for the feelings of others.

"You see", he went on, "I remembered the date of that storm because it was on my birthday. I spent that whole long day in the house—reading. Say, I'm awfully sorry I hurt that old waiter's pride in his memory. He looked as if he wanted to die."

"Oh Henry's all right," I said—and then, to change the subject: "Reading? What were you reading?"

He hesitated a minute. "Swift," he replied. As he said it I received the curious impression that he had pronounced the name with the same hushed intonation that my Aunt Julia uses when mentioning Woodrow Wilson.

"Swift," I said. "Old Jonathan Swift? That's a strange taste. What on earth—"

"Why you see", he said, "it's Swift's birthday, too — November thirtieth—sort of sentimental, isn't it?" He darted a quick glance at me—almost as if he were searching

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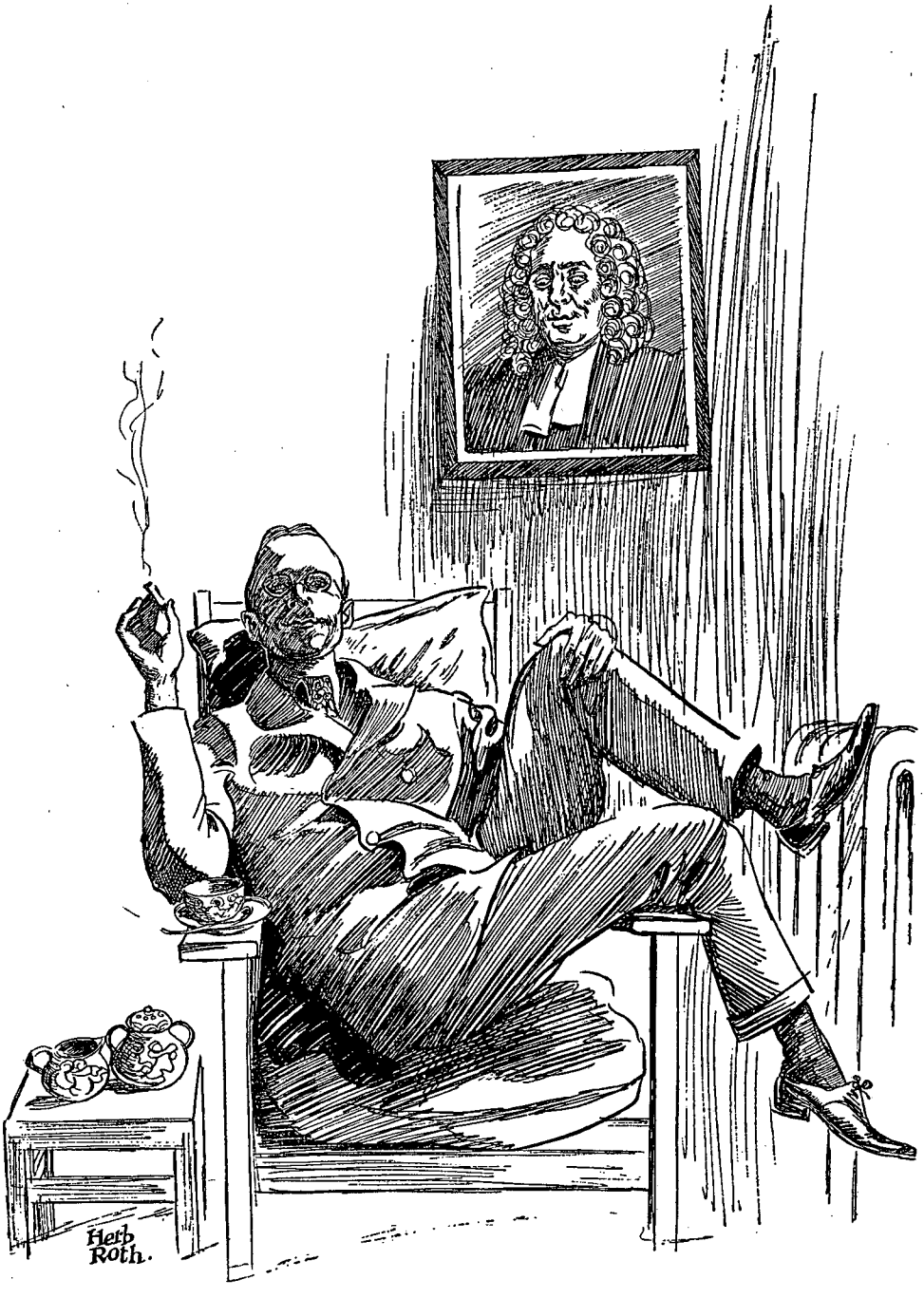

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for some sympathy—or feared some ridicule.

"Why no," I replied. "I wish more young men would read him. And I wish to heaven that America would produce a Swift—"

"Why, that's just—" began Alfred. Then he stopped. He blushed. "The Swift is not always to the race," he said.

"Oh wonderful," I cried; "priceless. Did you just make that up?"

"That's an unfair question," replied Swift, laughing. "It's a pretty good one, though, isn't it?"

Henry arrived with the pumpkin pie—a cold silent Henry with two cold and diminutive pieces of pie. We were rebuked—after Henry's fashion. Swift looked at him and smiled.

"Say, I'm not so terribly sure about the date of that storm last year," said he. "Quite probably you were right."

Henry looked at him for the first time.

"Yes sir," he said; "will you have coffee sir?" The breach was healed. Henry was appeased. I breathed more freely. And I am sure that Swift did.

"I sort of don't feel comfortable, if I think I've offended someone," he said, after Henry had retired. "Especially someone I don't know."

I agreed with him. We discussed friendships. The conversation turned from friendships to clubs—to hobbies—thence quite naturally to books and authors.

"Sort of funny, isn't it," said Swift, "my being born on the same day and having the same name." Again that timid, questioning glance of his.

"Yes," I replied. I lighted a cigar. "Any relationship?"

Swift shook his head. "I couldn't find any." Then he added, quickly, "Of course I didn't look into it. Very much."

"Swift was a great man," I said. It was the kind of remark one should be permitted to make only after the age of forty. So I added, "A great hater—a great scourge—"

"Don't you think", said Swift, "that he possessed certain qualities which are rather lacking in modern American writers?"

"Most assuredly", I said, "although I'd except from your statement certain of our younger critics—"

"I was thinking", said Swift, "more of our—our older writers—men for example like—like—well, say Irvin Cobb—"

We were practically alone by this time in the dining room. Occasional laughs reached us now and then from the three or four waiters gathered together at the other end of the hall. A solitary white-bearded member sat reading a paper and sipping coffee at one of the east windows.

"I'm planning a book," said Alfred; "it's sort of a satire."

"Satire," I cried. "Good! I've often wondered why none of our young men were writing satire—it's a glorious field."

"You know", said Swift, "I'm not really a humorist."

I glanced at him. I puffed at my cigar. So that was it. Swift wasn't a humorist because—Swift was a satirist. Or was he?

"Tell me", I said, "about your book."

"You won't be bored?" he asked.

"If I am", I said, "I'll tell you."

"Well, in the first place", he began, "the title is to be 'Lilliput Revisited'—"

I was not bored by Swift's prospectus of his satire. Quite the contrary.

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I was fascinated. It seemed to me, as he outlined the general plan, that there was the possibility for a great piece of work. I became enthusiastic. So did Swift. I smoked another cigar. The shams of American society, the cheapness of American politics, the hypocrisy of American morality—all were to be mercilessly satirized in "Lilliput Revisited". And as for American literature—

"The fellows I want to get", said Swift—and his voice rose higher and higher with excitement, "are these literary log-rollers—these fellows who pat-each-other-on-the-back-even-unto-the-fifth-and-sixth-editions. I want to lay low these men who bring into the profession of literature the tactics of the insurance salesman and the advertising representative. I want to tear to pieces these young authors who think that literature is a question of getting mentioned in some daily column or gossip box—these literary 'Town Topics' heelers. I want to make ridiculous these fellows who tag around after critics—these prostitutes of the 'lunch and tea' schools. I want to smash them all—the fakes!"

It was exciting. It was inspiring. When Swift finished, I reached over and shook him by the hand.

"God give you strength," I said with emotion.

"I'm afraid", he replied, "that we have kept those waiters here long past their time." It seemed rather an anticlimactic remark — somewhat as though Dante were to conclude a reading of the "Divine Comedy" by apologizing for having worn his old clothes. And yet it was in keeping with Swift's character. He was sensitive — extremely sensitive — to the feelings of others.

II

I did not see Alfred Swift again for two or three months. This was not entirely my fault. For several weeks I made unsuccessful efforts to engage him for luncheon. We never seemed able to find a day on which he was free. On my last attempt I chided him in a joking manner about his annoying "popularity" — annoying in that it made it impossible for me to see anything of him. That was a mistake. For fifteen minutes I listened at the telephone while Swift explained, with great seriousness, that he was not "popular", and that he was working very hard. He confirmed this, as they say in the business world, by mail in the morning. His "apologia" was convincing.

I had various reports of his progress, however, from divers sources. This person had seen him at luncheon with Smith, the critic for the "Sun"; so and so had met him at tea at the home of Billings, the publisher. My friend Miss Brown, who conducts the weekly book page for the "Times", told me that she thought he was one of the most charming men she had ever met. Apparently everybody liked him—and apparently everybody was being given ample opportunity to do so. I was delighted.

And yet I was, in a way, disappointed. I was jealous of my friendship for this young man. It somehow seemed to me that he and I shared a secret. I often felt like saying, when I saw his name mentioned by this or that columnist or literary editor, "What do you know about this man Swift, after all?" I took a keen delight in smiling to myself whenever I saw him referred to as a "humorist". I got into the habit of searching through newspapers and magazines for some announcement of the

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plans for "Lilliput Revisited". "Lilliput Revisited" was never mentioned. But Alfred Swift was. Quite often.

I had a chance to see him, but only for a few moments, at a dinner given in February by the Gog and Magog Club in honor of some visiting celebrity. The Gog and Magog—or G. and M., as it is called—is composed chiefly of authors, actors, artists, musicians, editors, and more or less revolves around the polished and charming personality of "Gus" Murphy—a curious name for such a thorough gentleman—one-time editor of THE BOOKMAN. As his friend of many years' standing, I am occasionally asked to attend the dinners—stag and otherwise—with which the club honors and entertains various well-known personages. The lion of this particular evening happened to be, I believe, an English author — I remember very little about him except that he was short and his speech wasn't. After the speeches we adjourned to another of the club rooms, at one end of which was an improvised stage where "Gus" had arranged for various "stunts" by G. and M. members — charades, burlesque opera, etc. During the preparations for the first of these I managed to squeeze into a seat near the place where Swift was engaged in telling a story—an amusing story, apparently—to Heyward Brown, the critic on the "Journal". When he had finished, he told him another. Then he noticed me.

"Hello there," he said, grabbing my hand enthusiastically. "I'm glad to see you. Will you pardon me a minute — there's somebody over there I want to speak to. I'll be right back."

He didn't come right back. But he came back after he had spoken to five or six gentlemen whom I recognized as more or less well-known figures in the literary world.

"Now", he said, "let's have a quiet chat. You don't know how I hate all this. Hello there Tom—good evening, Mr. Canfield." He waved to two men in another corner of the room. "That's Canfield", he explained, "of the 'Post'."

"Oh," I said.

That was about as far at first as our quiet chat got. No sooner would I begin a sentence than Swift would discover someone to whom he hadn't spoken. I got the impression that in some manner the whole success of the party rested on his shoulders. The strain must have been terrific. Finally he seemed to quiet down.

"How is 'Lilliput' coming?" I asked.

"Oh fine," he said. "Perfectly fine. Perfectly fine." He seemed to be listening for something. A voice in front had called, "How about 'Gunga Din'?" Someone else cried, "We want 'Gunga Din'!"

"Perfectly fine," repeated Swift, smiling inanely. "Perfectly fine."

"Come on Alfred—please let's have 'Gunga Din' old man" — this from suave "Gus" Murphy himself, standing on the stage.

Swift arose. "Excuse me," he whispered to me. "It's a silly stunt they want me to do. I'll come back."

It wasn't a silly stunt. It was quite amusing. I laughed. Swift's imitation of an eight year old girl's attempt to recite Kipling's ballad was funny—"You may talk o' gin and beer", etc.—funny as the deuce. I almost forgave him for all the irritation his nervous behavior had caused me. Besides, I remembered his sensitivity to the desires of others. That was it. That explained the amazing difference between Swift alone and Swift in a

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crowd. I went home determined to see him again—alone.

I did not get my wish for many weeks. And then one day I happened for the first time in many months to be lunching at the Algonick Hotel. It is at the Algonick that one may meet many of the city's more conspicuous dramatic and literary figures. And it was there that I met Swift.

He was taking lunch with one of the leading "columnists" — or rather he had just finished, for as I entered the dining room his friend got up and said goodby. Swift saw me and beckoned. I went.

"Please sit down," said he, rising and greeting me enthusiastically. "I'm just finishing my coffee."

I sat down. I ordered my lunch.

"The apple pie is good today," said Swift.

"Thanks," I said, and added it to my order. "I don't really come here often enough to—"

"Neither do I," said Swift, quickly. Very quickly. Almost too quickly.

We were silent.

"Well how are things going?" I offered. Somehow I did not feel that it was the time for me to mention "Lilliput".

"Pretty good," he said, lighting a cigarette. "Except that I haven't had much chance to work on 'Lilliput'—at least as far as the actual writing of it goes." Evidently it was on his mind. I was glad.

"But I'm getting a lot of material for it—especially as regards these literary log-rollers—these self-advertisers. Lord, you don't know how they disgust me."

"They must," I said. He glanced at me quickly. "They certainly must," I added, with conviction.

"Are you going to the G. and M. Friday — the 'younger generation' night?" he asked. I remembered having received an invitation from "Gus" Murphy that morning—his letter had mentioned an evening devoted to speeches by the younger writers.

"I hardly think so," I said; "I have another engagement."

"Well", said Swift, "I'm on the program—"

"'Gunga Din'?" I asked, smiling.

He blushed. "No," he said. "I'm going to make a speech. And I'm going to 'shoot the works'."

"'Shoot the works'?" I queried.

"I mean", said Swift, "that I'm going to tell these would-be literary 'great ones' just what I think of their cheap advertising methods. Do you remember what I said about them when we discussed 'Lilliput Revisited'?"

"I certainly do," I replied.

"Well", he said, "that's what I'm going to say Friday night. I'm going to 'shoot the works'."

"Great!" I said. Then I added—and I watched him closely as I said it, "It will take courage."

His jaws came together with a click; he looked me straight in the eye.

"Of course it will," he said. "Of course it will."

We discussed the details. When my luncheon arrived, Swift got up to leave.

"I'm sorry you aren't going to be there," he said, as we shook hands. Then he added, "I suppose I'll hurt a lot of people's feelings."

"What do you care?" I said, squeezing his hand.

"I don't," he said. "I don't care." His last words as he left me, were, "I suppose I won't have a friend left in the world when I get through."

"Yes you will," I called after him. I do not think he heard me.

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III

I canceled my other engagement and went to the Gog and Magog Club on Friday night. I went partly to give Swift the benefit of my moral support, and partly, I shall admit, to dispel certain doubts which were beginning to arise in my mind concerning this young man and his projected visit to Lilliput.

Swift was not at the club when I arrived. But a great many other men in evening clothes were. I found myself in a whirl of chattering authors, critics, editors, journalists. I grasped a cocktail and edged my way over to a corner where I might escape the nerve-shattering bombardment of puns, wit, jokes, and literary gossip. I also wanted to keep an eye out for Swift in order that I might give him a few words of encouragement.

Swift arrived. He did not at first appear particularly worried. He was soon the centre of a noisy group of laughers. I lighted a cigarette and wandered casually over toward where he was talking. When he looked up and saw me I smiled encouragingly. For once he did not immediately return my smile.

"Good luck tonight, Swift," I said. "I'm with you."

"Oh", said he, "I thought you said you weren't coming." Then he added quickly, "I'm awfully glad to see you."

"I wouldn't miss this for the world, man", I said, "and you've got just the crowd you want—"

"Yes," said Swift, but with a certain lack of enthusiasm, "just the crowd I want."

We drifted into dinner. I found my place card after the usual lengthy search, near the end of the table which extended the length of the large room. At right angles to this long table — or, rather, forming the top side of a long white "T"—was the speakers' table, where sat "Gus" Murphy, toastmaster and host, flanked on both sides by somewhat nervous members of the "younger generation" of writers. And among the least calm, least self-possessed of these prospective speakers was Alfred Swift. It may have been the light thrown on his face by the candles—tall yellow candles on the table—which made him appear so pale. As the dinner progressed this pallor actually seemed to take on a greenish tinge somewhat the color of the walls. But I was at the farther end of the room, and candle light is deceptive.

I didn't enjoy that dinner particularly myself. My partner was one of the four ladies present—a fact which might have been considered a compliment. It was a doubtful compliment. Miss Bernice Burns was middle-aged and verbose, almost to silliness. But she was literary editor of the "Argus" — and the literary editor of the "Argus" could not well have been omitted from this particular dinner.

On my left was Professor Taylor Trask. I had known Trask several years. I did not like him. He was, is, and always will be, a Pollyanna. He is enthusiastic about everything. He is therefore one of the country's most prominent critics and book reviewers. His hearty endorsement and enthusiastic praise is to be found, I am sure, on the covers of some 250,000 different books 249,975 of which I am equally sure are now out of print. Perhaps I exaggerate. At any rate, I don't like him.

As the dinner progressed I grew more and more disgusted. It seemed to me that "Gus" Murphy had been guilty of a distinctly unfriendly act in placing me where he did. I decided

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that I would never again attend one of his literary dinners. Literary dinners—why, the real literary people never bothered about dinners. It was just as young Swift said—literature had degenerated. Your prominent literary figure was now a combination politician and advertising man. I grew impatient for the moment when Swift would hit out at these shams. I longed to "shoot the works" myself. But Swift would do it better. I had confidence in him.

"Do you know young Alfred Swift?"—it was Miss Burns talking. She was always talking. This time it was to me. I dropped a lump of sugar into my demitasse.

"Slightly," I said. I did not feel particularly like disclosing to her the bond which united Swift and me.

"I wonder what sort of a speech he will make tonight," said she. "I do hope he does well."

"I think", I said, "that he will surprise everybody." I smiled to myself at the particular nature of the surprise.

"Oh I hope so," babbled Miss Burns. "I think he is so attractive. I had the nicest cosiest chat—a regular tête-à-tête — with him the other day—Wednesday—no, Thursday—no, Wednesday. Do you know, I'll tell you something about Alfred Swift."

"Yes?" I said, taking a cigar from the box offered by the waiter, and preparing to light it.

"He isn't really a humorist."

I put the cigar down unlighted. I looked at Miss Burns. I did not speak.

"I don't mean", she went on, "that he isn't funny. I think his articles are perfectly screaming. And the stunts he does, too. Have you seen him recite 'Gunga Din'?" She paused to light a cigarette.

"Yes", I replied, "I have seen him do 'Gunga Din'."

"You know, it's the most remarkable thing in the world that—that—" There she stopped. It was a conversational characteristic of Miss Burns that when she forgot completely what she was talking about she would invariably start out with, "You know, it's the most remarkable thing in the world"—which usually gave her time to remember her old subject or invent a new one.

"We were discussing", I said, "Alfred Swift."

"Oh yes," she said. "You know, he's not really a humorist."

"So you said," I replied, somewhat savagely.

"No," said she, "he's not."

"How did you discover that?" I asked.

"Well, to tell you the truth", replied Miss Burns, "he told me so himself. You see, I happened to mention to him that I thought he was every bit as funny as Stephen Leacock—and my dear man, he then and there proceeded to have a dozen fits. You see, Leacock is a humorist, and Swift—"

"Is a satirist," I supplied. "Like Jonathan Swift."

"Exactly," she said; "and the remarkable thing is that his birthday and Jonathan Swift's both come on the same day."

"You don't tell me?" I said. "Isn't that a coincidence?"

We were interrupted by the toastmaster introducing the first speaker—a young poet named Stephen Walters. I did not hear any of Stephen Walters's speech. I was thinking about Alfred Swift.

"You know—" said Taylor Trask on my left, putting his arm affectionately around the back of my chair when the applause for young Walters's effort

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had died down, "you know, I'm mighty anxious to hear what Alfred Swift will say tonight."

"You've got nothing on me," I said glumly.

"You know", went on Trask, "I've had several corking talks with that young man. And I'll tell you something about him."

"I think I've already heard it," I replied.

"No", he said, "you haven't. It's simply this. Swift is not, my dear fellow, a humorist at all."

"You surprise me," I said, chewing savagely on my cigar.

"I *thought* I *would*," said Trask. "You see Swift and I happened to be talking about contemporary writers, and I compared him to—"

"Irvin Cobb," I suggested.

"No," said he.

"Stephen Leacock," was my next offer.

"No," replied Trask. "Robert Benchley. You see, the difference between Swift and Benchley — as Swift himself pointed out—is that Benchley is a humorist, whereas Swift is not really a funny man at all."

I burst somewhat unexpectedly into a laugh. "Oh yes he is," I said. "He's the funniest man I have ever known."

"That's just where you're wrong," said Trask, patting me on the knee. "My dear fellow, Swift is a satirist, like his namesake."

"You'll be telling me next", I said, "that his birthday comes on the same day."

Trask's face lighted up. "My dear fellow", he began — "as a matter of fact—"

The next speaker was a twenty-four year old Harvard novelist. His speech had something to do with style and form. I also think he mentioned Flaubert and Remy de Gourmont. I smoked another cigar. I did not applaud.

The toastmaster arose. "Our young writers", he began, "are not serious enough. One detects in their novels—their essays—a lamentable tendency toward humor. Readers of their works are occasionally seen to laugh. This is regrettable, ladies and gentlemen. Literature is a serious thing. Literature, like matrimony, is not lightly to be entered into. One does not read to be amused or to laugh. No. One reads to be made serious. Now our next speaker is just such a *serious young man*. His *first book*—'Blaa!'—brought gloom to thousands. Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you the real hero of Hugo's great romance—'L'homme qui jamais rit'—the most serious young man in the world—Alfred Swift."

Of course, everybody roared with laughter—that is, everybody except myself and Swift. It was an amusing introduction; "Gus" Murphy's introductions always are. But it somehow hardly put the audience in the mood for a bitter satirical tirade.

And yet, when he stood up, I thought he was going to do it. His face was pale, his jaw set. He did not acknowledge the applause. He stood there, trembling a little.

"I have", he began, "a serious speech to make tonight."

Everybody laughed. Swift stopped, surprised.

"I have", he said again, but more weakly, "a serious speech to make."

The laughter was even louder than before. Swift stopped, hesitated—

"You may talk—" he began. It was a fatal sentence.

"O' gin and beer," cried someone.

"That's it, Alfred!" cried another. "Give us 'Gunga Din'."

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" 'Gunga Din'! 'Gunga Din'! Please, Alfred."

And then Swift smiled. It was a smile of relief. It was the smile of relief of a man who is extremely sensitive to the desires of others—and extremely relieved to be able to satisfy those desires. I did not stay to hear "Gunga Din".

IV

It has been seven years since that night. I have not as yet read "Lilliput Revisited". Possibly it has not as yet been written—at least by Alfred Swift. He has, I understand, done extremely well—financially. Not so well perhaps as that other great American who bears the name of the famous Dean. But literature can never be expected to equal meat-packing as a source of income. Alfred has done well. I have read several of his books. They all show the traces of his particular genius—they are all, I should say, the work of a man who is really a humorist.

TO A CHILD IN DEATH

By Charlotte Mew

YOU would have scoffed if we had told you yesterday
Love made us feel, or so it was with me, like some great bird
Trying to hold and shelter you in its strong wing:—
A gay little shadowy smile would have tossed us back such a solemn word,
And it was not for that you were listening
When so quietly you slipped away
With half the music of the world unheard.
What shall we do with this strange summer, meant for you,—
Dear, if we see the winter through
What shall be done with spring — ?
This, this is the victory of the grave; here is death's sting,
That it is not strong enough, our strongest wing.

But what of His who like a Father pitieth?
His Son was also, once, a little thing,
The wistfulest child that ever drew breath,
Chased by a sword from Bethlehem and in the busy house at Nazareth
Playing with little rows of nails, watching the carpenter's hammer swing,
Long years before His hands and feet were tied
And by a hammer and the three great nails He died,
Of youth, of Spring,
Of sorrow, of loneliness, of victory the King,
Under the shadow of that wing.

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OUT OF MY NEWSPAPER DAYS

By Theodore Dreiser

V: I QUIT THE GAME

THE things which most contributed to my want of newspaper success in New York and eventually drove me, though much against my will and understanding, into an easier and more agreeable phase of life were, first, that awe of the grinding and almost disgusting forces of life itself which I found in Spencer and Huxley and Balzac. This train of thought now persistently haunted me and, in combination with a depressed physical condition, made it impossible for me to work with any of the zest that had characterized my work in the west. Next, there was that astounding contrast between wealth and poverty, here more sharply emphasized than anywhere else in America. It gave the great city a gross and cruel and mechanical look, emphasized not only by the papers themselves with their various summaries of investigations and exposures, but also by my own hourly contact with it — a look so harsh and indifferent at times as to leave me a little numb. Again, there was something so disgusting and disillusioning in the sharp contrast between the professed ideals and preachments of such a constantly moralizing journal as the "World" and the heartless and savage aspect of its internal economy. Men such as myself were mere machines or privates in an ill paid army to be thrown into any breach. There was no time off for the spacemen, unless it was for all time. One was expected to achieve the results desired or get out; and if one did achieve them the reward was nothing either.

One day I met an acquaintance and asked about an ex-city editor out of St. Louis who had come to New York. His answer staggered me.

"Oh, Cliff? Didn't you hear? Why, he committed suicide down here in a West Street hotel."

"What was the trouble?" I asked.

"Tired of the game, I guess," he replied rather airily. "He didn't get along down here as well as he had out there. I guess he felt that he was going downhill."

I walked away, meditating. He had been an excellent newspaper man, as brisk and self-centred as one need be to prosper. The last time I had seen him he had been in good physical condition, and yet, after something like a year in New York, he had killed himself.

However, my mood was not that of one who runs away from a grueling contest. I had no least notion of leaving New York, whatever happened, although I constantly speculated as to what I should do once all my money was gone. I had no trade or profession beyond this reporting, and yet I was convinced that there must be something else that I could do.

But what was it?

Drudging along as I was at the most inconsequential of tasks, I was haunted by the thought that in reality I was a misfit, that I might have to give up

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and return to the west, where in some pathetic humdrum task I should eke out a barren and pointless life. In view of this probable end or result, I now began to think that I must not give up but must instead turn to letters, the art of short story writing. Only just how I was to do this I could not see. I had never written a short story in my life and did not really believe that I could learn how. Yet one of the things that prompted me to do so was the fact that on this very paper at the time, or so I understood, were several who had succeeded in that or in allied fields—David Graham Phillips, for one, and James Creelman, then a correspondent for the paper at the war which had broken out between China and Japan, to say nothing of George Cary Eggleston and Reginald de Koven, the latter on the staff as chief musical critic. There was another young man whose name I have forgotten, who was said to be a rapidly growing favorite in the offices of the "Century". Then there were those new arrivals in the world of letters, Kipling, Richard Harding Davis, Stephen Crane, and some others, whose success if not work always fascinated me.

All this was but an irritant to a bubbling chemistry which as yet had found no solution, and was not likely to find one for some time to come. My reading of Spencer and Huxley, to say nothing of Balzac, in nowise tended to clarify and impel my mind in the direction of fiction, or even philosophy; quite the contrary. The result if anything was to confuse rather than to clarify. And now, as in a kind of ferment or fever, due to my necessities and my desperation, I set to examining the various current magazines and the fiction and articles to be found therein ("Century", "Scribner's", "Harper's"). I was more than ever confounded by the wide discrepancy existing between my own observations and those displayed here: the beauty and peace and charm and delight found in everything written about by everyone else, the almost complete absence of any reference to the coarse and the vulgar and the cruel and the terrible, which somehow seemed to me as much if not more a part of the visible scene than the other. How did it come that these most remarkable persons, geniuses one and all of course, as I took them to be (and this is not written in any mocking or cynical way), saw life in this happy and even roseate way? Was it so and was I all wrong? Love was almost invariably rewarded, in these tales, as anyone could read. Almost invariably one's dreams came true, in the magazines. Most of these bits of fiction, delicately phrased and colorfully spun, flowed so easily, with such an air of assurance, omniscience, and supercondescension, that I was quite put out by my own lacks and defects. How could one as dumb as myself ever hope to write? In the main they seemed to deal with phases of sweetness and beauty and success and goodness such as I rarely if ever encountered anywhere. There were so many tales of the old south, reeking with a poetry which was poetry and little more (George W. Cable, Thomas Nelson Page). In "Harper's" I found such assured writers as William Dean Howells, Charles Dudley Warner, Frank R. Stockton, Mrs. Humphry Ward, and a score of others, all of them writing of nobility of character and sacrifice and greatness of ideals and joy in simple things.

But personally, as I viewed the strenuous world about me, all of this which I read seemed not to have so

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very much to do with it. People were happy and successful to a degree, but no more; there were many, many who were not. Perhaps, as I now thought, life such as I saw, these darker current phases, was never to be written about. Maybe it was not the legitimate province of fiction. Certainly life as portrayed in these tales was in nowise like that about me. I had only to recount my daily newspaper experiences to myself to know this. I read and read, but all I could gather was that I had no such tales to tell, and however much I tried I could not even think of any.

Assigned to do routine work in connection with the East Twenty-seventh Street police station, Bellevue Hospital, and the New York Charities Department, which included branches that looked after the poor farm, the morgue, an insane asylum or two, a workhouse, and what not else, I was called upon daily to face as disagreeable and depressing a series of scenes as it is possible for a single human being to witness. Instead of it being possible for me to come across interesting and possibly amusing things of a lighter character which would have served to fix me in the minds of my superiors as a clever gatherer of news, I was compelled, for one thing, to inquire of fat, red-faced sergeants, door keepers and the like who reigned in police stations, hospital registry rooms, and elsewhere, what if anything was new. By being as genial and agreeable as possible and so earning their favor, I would obtain an occasional tip as to the most unimportant of brawls. Yet even so, had I been in a different state mentally, the thickness and incommunicability of some of these individuals would not have been proof against my arts. I could have devised or manufactured some sort of narrative.

There was the morgue, for instance —that horrible place! Daily from the ever-flowing waters about New York there were recaptured or washed up in all stages and degrees of decomposition the flotsam and jetsam of the great city, its offal, its victims—its what? I came here every day (it stood at the foot of East Twenty-sixth Street near Bellevue Hospital) and invariably I found the same old brown-denimed caretaker in charge, a creature so thick and so lethargic and so mentally incompetent generally that it was all I could do to extract a grunt of recognition out of him. This creature, if handed a cigar occasionally or a bag of tobacco, would trouble to get out of his chair and let you look over a book or ledger containing the roughly jotted down police descriptions, all done in an amazing scrawl, of the height, weight, color of clothes if any, complexion of hair and eyes where these were still distinguishable, probable length of time in water, contents of pockets, jewelry or money if any, etc., which were to be noted in connection with any mystery or disappearance of a person. And there was always someone "turning up missing". I noticed, for one thing, and with considerable cynicism, that rarely if ever was there any money or jewelry reported as found by the police. That would have been too much to expect.

Being further persuaded via blandishments or tips of one kind and another, this caretaker would lead the way to a shelf of drawers reaching from the floor to the chest-height of a man or higher, and running about two sides of the room. Opening those containing the latest arrivals, he would allow you to gaze upon the last of that strange composite or chemical

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formula which had once functioned as a human being here on earth. The faces! The decay! The clothing! I stared in sad horror and promised myself that I would never again look, but duty to the paper compelled me so to do again and again.

And then there was Bellevue itself, that grey-black collection of brick and stone with connecting bridges of iron, which faced, in winter time at least, the grey, icy waters of the East River. I have never been able to forget it, so drear and bleak was it all. The hobbling ghouls of caretakers in their baggy brown cotton suits wandering here and there or hovering over stoves; the large number of half-well charity patients idling about in grey-green gingham, their faces sunken and pinched, their hair poorly combed! And the chipper and yet often coarse and vulgar and always overbearing young doctors and nurses and paid attendants generally! One need but remember that it was the heyday of the most corrupt period of Tammany Hall's shameless political control of New York, Mr. Croker being still in charge. Quite all of those old buildings have since been replaced and surrounded by a tall iron fence and bordered with an attractive lawn. In those days it was a little different: there was the hospital proper, with its various wards, its detention hospital for the criminal or insane, or both, the morgue, and a world of smaller pavilions stretching along the river front and connected by walks or covered hallways or iron bridges, but lacking the dignity and care of the later structures. There was in addition too the dark psychology which attends any badly or foully managed institution, that something which hovers as a cloud over all,—and Bellevue at that time had that air and that psychology. It smacked more of a jail and a poorhouse combined than of a hospital, and so it was, I think. At that time it was a seething world of medical and political and social graft, a kind of human hell or sty. Those poor fish who live in comfortable and protected homes and find their little theories and religious beliefs readymade for them in some overawing church or social atmosphere, should be permitted to take an occasional peep into a world such as this was then. At the very time there was an investigation and an exposure on in connection with this institution, which had revealed not only the murder of helpless patients, but the usual graft in connection with food, drugs, clothing, etc., furnished to the patients in the name of charity. Grafting officials and medics, and brutes of nurses and attendants abounded, of course. The number of "drunks" and obstreperous or complaining or troublesome patients doped or beaten or thrown out and even killed, and the number and quality of operations conducted by incompetent or indifferent medics, were known and shown to be large. One need only return to the legislative investigations of that date to come upon the truth of this.

And the place was so huge and crowded that it was like a city in itself. For one thing, it was a dumping ground for all the offal gathered by the police and the charity departments, to say nothing of being a realm of "soft snaps" for political pensioners of all kinds. On such days as relatives and friends of charity patients or those detained by the police were permitted to call, the permit room fairly swarmed with people who were pushed and shunted here and there like cattle, and always browbeaten like slaves. I myself,

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visiting subsequently as a stranger, was often so treated. "Who? What's his name? What? Whendee come? When? Talk a little louder, can't you? Whatsy matter with your tongue? Over there! Over there! Out that door there!" So we came, procured our little cards, and passed in or out.

And the wretched creatures who were "cured" or written down well enough to walk, and so, before a serious illness had been properly treated and because they were not able to pay, were shunted out into the world of the well and the strong with whom they were supposed to compete once more and make their way! I used to see them coming and going and have talked to scores, men and women who had never had a dollar above their meagre needs and who, once illness overtook them, had been swept into this limbo, only to be turned out again at the end of a few weeks or months to make their way as best they might, and really worse off than when they came. For now they were in a weak condition physically as well as penniless, and sometimes, as I noticed, on the day of their going the weather was most inclement. And the old, wrinkled, washed out clothing doled out to them, in which they were once more to wander back to the tenements—to do what? There was a local charity organization at the time, as there is today, but if it acted in behalf of any of these I never saw it. They wandered away west on Twenty-sixth Street and along First and Second Avenue—those drear, dismal, underdog streets—to where?

But by far the most irritating of all the phases of this institution, to me at least, were the various officials, and the dancing young medics and nurses in their white uniforms, the latter too often engaged in flirting with one another or tennis-playing or reading in some warm room, their feet planted upon a desk the while they smoked and the while the great institution with all its company of miserables wagged its indifferent way. When not actually visiting their patients one could always find them so ensconced somewhere, reading or smoking or talking or flirting. In spite of the world of misery that was thrashing about them they were as comfortable as may be, and to me, when bent upon unraveling the details of some particular case, they always seemed heartless. "Oh, that old nut? What's interesting about him? Surely you don't expect to dig up anything interesting about him, do you? He's been here three weeks now. No; we don't know anything about him. Don't the records show?" Or, supposing he had died: "I knew he couldn't live. We couldn't give him the necessary attention here. He didn't have any money, and there's too many here as it is. Wanta see an interesting case?" And then one might be led in to some wretch who was out of his mind or had an illusion of some kind. "Funny old duck, eh? But there's no hope. He'll be dead in a week or so."

I think the most sickening thing I ever saw was cash gambling among two young medics and a young nurse in charge of the receiving ward as to whether the next patient to be brought in by the ambulance, which had been sent out on a hurry accident call, would arrive alive or dead.

"Fifty that he's dead!"

"Fifty that he isn't!"

"I say alive!"

"I say dead!"

"Well, hand me that stethoscope. I'm not going to be fooled by looks this time!"

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In came tearing the ambulance, its bell clanging, the hubs of the wheels barely missing the walls of the entryway. As the stretcher was pulled out and set down on the stone step under the archway, the three pushed about and hung over, feeling the heart and looking at the eyes and lips, now pale blue as in death, quite as one might crowd about a curious specimen of plant or animal.

"He's alive!"

"He's dead!"

"I say he's alive! Look at his eyes!" to illustrate which one eye was forced open.

"Aw, what's eatin' you! Listen to his heart! Haven't I got the stetho on it? Listen for yourself!"

The man was dead, but the jangle lasted a laughing minute or more, the while he lay there; then he was removed to the morgue and the loser compelled to "come across" or "fork over".

One of the internes who occasionally went out "on the wagon", as the ambulance was called, told me that once, after picking up a badly injured man who had been knocked down by a car, the ambulance which was racing with him to the hospital had knocked down another man and all but killed him.

"And what did you do about him?" I asked.

"Stopped the boat and chucked him into it, of course."

"On top of the other one?"

"Side by side, sure. It was a little close, though."

"Well, did he die?"

"Yep. But the other one was all right. We couldn't help it, though. It was a life or death case for the first one."

"A fine deal for the merry bystander," was all I could say.

Whether due to a naturally weak and incompetent physique or a mind which unduly tortures itself with the evidences of a none too smooth working of the creative impulse and its machinery, or whether I had merely had my fill of reportorial work as such and could endure no more (or whatever else or nothing else might have been the cause), the darksome atmosphere of this delinquent and defective world with which I was now connected finally determined me to get out of the newspaper profession entirely, come what might and cost what it might. Though just what I was to do once I was out, I could not guess. As I have said, I had no trade or profession other than this, and the thought of editing or writing for anything save a newspaper was as far from me as was, say, engineering or painting. I did not think I could write anything beyond newspaper news items, and with this conclusion many will no doubt be glad to agree even unto this day.

Yet out of this messy and heartless world in which I was now working I did occasionally extract a tale that was printable, only so low was my credit that I rarely won the privilege of writing it myself. Had I imagined that I could write I might easily have built up an exposé or color story out of what I saw in those ways and places or learned inside and out of the newspaper reportorial rooms, which would have shocked the souls of the dilettante magazine editors and writers; but it would never have been published. It would have been too low, gruesome, drab, horrible, and so beyond the view of any current magazine or its clientele.

Life at that time, outside of the dark picture of it presented by its daily papers, must, as I have shown, be all

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sweetness and gaiety and humor. We must discuss only our better selves, and that via a happy ending; or if perchance this realer world must of necessity be referred to, it must be indicated in some cloudy nebulous manner which would give it more the charm of shadow than of fact, something used to enchance the values of the lighter and more perfect and beautiful things with which our lives must perforce concern themselves. Marriage, if I read the current magazines correctly, was a sweet and delicate affair, never marred by the slightest ion of error or erratic conduct of any kind. Love was made in heaven and lasted forever. Ministers, doctors, and, in the main, lawyers and merchants, were all good men, rarely if ever guilty of the shams and subterfuges and trashy aspects of humanity so common to the lay world. If a man did an evil thing it was due to his lower nature, which really had nothing to do with his higher—and it was a great concession for the intelligentsia of that day (maybe of this) to admit that he had two, one of which was not high. Most of us had only the higher one, our better nature. . . . . When I think of the literary and social snobbery of that day, its utter futility and profound faith in its own goodness, as opposed to facts of its own visible life, I have to smile.

But it never occurred to me that I could write, in the magazine or literary sense, and as for editing, I never even thought of it. And yet that was the very next thing I did. Instead, I wandered about thinking how I was to do, deciding each day that if I had the courage of a rat I would no longer endure this time-consuming game of reporting, and especially for the pitiful sum which each week I was allowed to draw. What more could it do for me? I asked myself over and over. Make me more aware of the brutality, subtlety, force, charm, selfishness, and what not else of life? It could not if I worked at it a hundred years, or so I reasoned. Essentially, as I even then saw, it was a boy's game, and I was slowly but surely passing out of the boy stage. Swiftly I saw disappearing the amount which I had saved up, and yet I had not one other thing in sight. In desperation I visited other newspaper offices to see if I could not secure, temporarily at least, a better regular salary; but no. Whenever I could get in to see a city or managing editor, which was rare, no one seemed to want me. The times were against me. At the offices of the "Herald", "Times", "Tribune", "Sun", and elsewhere the same outer office system worked to keep me out, and I was by now too indifferent to the reportorial work and too discouraged to really wish to force myself in or to continue as a reporter at all. Indeed I went about this matter of inquiry more or less perfunctorily, not really believing in either myself or my work. If I had secured a well paying position I presume that I would have continued. Fortunately or unfortunately, as one chooses to look at such things, I did not; but it seemed far from fortunate then to me, as I can tell you.

Finally one Saturday afternoon, having brought in a story which related to a missing girl whose body was found at the morgue, and being told to "give the facts to———and let him write it", I summoned up sufficient courage to say to the assistant who ordered me to do it:

"I don't see why I should always have to do this. I'm not a beginner in this game. I wrote stories, and big ones, before ever I came to this paper."

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"Maybe you did", he replied rather sardonically, "but we have the feeling that you haven't proved to be of much use to us."

After this there was nothing to say and nothing to do. I could not say that I had no opportunities; but just the same I was terribly hurt in my pride. Without knowing what to do or where to go, I there and then decided that, come what might, this was the end of newspaper reporting for me. Never again, if I died in the fight, would I condescend to be a reporter on any paper. I might starve, but if so —I would starve. Either I was going to get something different, something more profitable to my mind, or I was going to starve—or get out of New York.

I went to the individual named and turned over my data, then secured my hat and went out. I felt that even though I did not do this I should be dismissed eventually anyhow for incompetence and insubordination, so dark was my mood in regard to all of it. Therefore out I went.

Thus ended my newspaper experiences, never resumed save as a writer of Sunday specials, and then under entirely different conditions—but that was ten years later. In the meantime I was now perforce turning toward a world which had never seemed to contain any future for me, and I was doing it without really knowing it. "But that", as Kipling has so often remarked anent some side issue of one of his tales, "is another story." It might better be described under some such title as "Literary Experiences".

BAFFLED

By Milton Raison

THERE was a dreamer and he knew no jest,
His mind was dull to bantering and quips —
But those black eyes of his that flashed like whips,
Curled out to beauty; he was beauty-blest,
And his two feet could only find a rest
When they had brought him out to watch the ships,
To lick the salt that clustered on his lips,
And breathe the ocean-wind with newer zest.

So he went off to sea to flee the laughter
On land, and soon on ship there spread a rumor,
"The new kid hasn't got a sense of humor,
Let's fool with him"—and teasing followed after;
And so the dreamer, baffled at his duty,
Jumped overboard in search of mirthless beauty.

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THE PRACTICAL SIDE OF WRITING

By Robert Cortes Holliday

II: HOW TO APPROACH THE MODERN PUBLISHER

(In connection with Mr. Holliday's series, THE BOOKMAN announces a new Bureau of Practical Advice to Writers. Any question regarding the mechanical details of authorship will be answered by the editor or referred to the proper authority. The best of these questions and answers will, from time to time, be published, for the information of those interested.—J. F.)

NEW YORK, *March*, 1922.

IN the preceding paper of this series the subject dealt with was the situation between the beginner writer and the magazines. The article was designed to give information concerning the placing by the young author of manuscripts of a length suitable for publication in periodicals: short stories, essays, or poems. A number of things remain to be considered about the handling of manuscripts of book length. And some of the suggestions that were presented regarding dealing with magazine editors would not apply at all in the matter of approaching book publishers.

So few people outside of the publishing field, I have found, understand in the least the problems or the machinery of book publishing that, as in the preceding paper, I shall not hesitate in this article to be very elementary. Letters like this come into publishing houses every day:

> I would like to know what is the best I could do on a plainly bound volume without gilt adornments, about the size of the ordinary novel —or a shade smaller—with wide margins equally divided at top and bottom of pages, and printed on thick enough paper in large enough type to pad the story to sufficient size.

And another:

> It was my idea to send copies of it to newspapers at times publishing reviews of books; hoping in that way to attract favorable criticism, that would enable me to secure for it attention from the public, then willing to produce it on shares.

The way in which most books are published is on the basis of a royalty paid to the author on each copy sold, the publisher assuming all cost of manufacture and marketing of the volume, and accepting all risk in the enterprise. It is the custom generally for royalties to be paid twice a year. Very popular authors can command a greater royalty than others. A higher royalty is paid on fiction than on non-fiction. A very usual royalty is ten per cent. on the first two thousand copies sold, and fifteen per cent. thereafter. On some types of book, poetry for instance, less is frequently paid.

A book manuscript submitted to a publishing house goes through very much the same sort of editorial routine that a shorter manuscript does when sent to a magazine. It is received, title and name of author entered in a record book, it is given a number, placed in a safe or cabinet, and in its turn receives a reading. A card or form letter acknowledging its receipt usually is at once sent to the author. Publishing houses do not assume responsibility for the safety of manuscripts in their possession. In some cases where a manuscript in the hands of a publishing house has been lost or destroyed the publishers have as a matter of courtesy paid the author an amount sufficient to cover the cost of retyping it. Though I think manuscripts with publishers are very rarely lost or destroyed, curious accidents do some-

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times happen to them. I recall an instance where a manuscript taken home by a reader over night was chewed up by a dog. An author should never fail to retain a copy of his work.

There are still persons here and there ambitious to become writers who submit manuscripts in long hand. Such a manuscript carries a very heavy handicap in receiving interested consideration. When the material submitted is printed matter which has previously appeared in newspapers and magazines it is well to have it neatly pasted onto manuscript paper, and not rolled into a wad with little or no head or tail to it.

In submitting book length manuscripts it is a good plan for the author to send a letter with the manuscript, stating *briefly* who he is and of what books already published, if any, he is the author. If the manuscript deals with, say, "child science", and the author is a woman who (though she may not have published anything) has been long active in such work and a successful lecturer on the subject, it would be pertinent for her to tell that, succinctly. But it is not good policy, to put it so, for the author to say anything with flowers.

A synopsis accompanying the manuscript is sometimes a great convenience to the publishers' readers, but it may be a dangerous thing, too. If it is not skilfully and interestingly written, it may prejudice the reader at the very start. And good synopses of book length manuscripts are very difficult to write.

In the preceding article the practice was discussed of professional writers sending in to magazine editors brief outlines or synopses of articles which they proposed to write. Some magazine editors, a few, it was reported, felt that this procedure might be employed now and then, with advantage to both author and editor, by writers not of established reputation. This plan, however, in the case of a new writer certainly is one of the most hopeless things in the world to attempt with a book publisher.

People continually do send into publishing houses letters designed to show that the peculiar circumstances of their lives present excellent material for books they would like to write. The writers of such letters ask if the house is interested in the volume they have in mind, and some of them apparently expect to come to "terms" at once. The author of one of these letters may have had a remarkably romantic career, been born among Indians, married a princess of the tribe, or something like that, but no literary adviser to a publishing house can form any idea of what sort of book he might make out of it. And a woman who has led one of the most ordinary existences imaginable may any day send into an editorial office the manuscript of one of the most successful books of the day.

Several thousand unsolicited manuscripts of book length come into any large publishing house in the course of a year. Manuscripts of books of highly specialized character are usually, after a preliminary examination establishing a possibility of their value, sent to "outside readers" who are specialists in their various fields. A work on psychology would go to a professional psychologist, very likely to several, if the first report on the book seemed to the editorial department to warrant this. That a highly valuable book on such a subject was in course of preparation, would, however, very likely have been known to

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a house having an educational list, and some negotiation would probably have preceded the arrival of the manuscript. The manuscript of a religious book would probably be passed on by a minister; a story for young girls might go to a librarian specializing in work with children. And so on.

In the preceding article the advice of numerous magazine editors was represented in the counsel to novice writers to study the different character of various magazines. What is one publication's meat is another's poison. And this is so, too, in a very considerable degree of publishing houses. A very good idea for the writer attempting to place his first book would be for him to collect and study the catalogs of different publishers. A bookseller will frequently say, upon hearing merely the title of a book which he does not readily place in his mind: "That sounds like a Doran book", or "a Holt book", or "a Doubleday book", as the case may be.

Some houses, of course, publish more kinds of books than other houses. But a thing understood practically not at all outside of the book business is that a publishing house which is very successful with a list of books which it has made its own kind might, if it should accept such a volume, fail with a book of a type which it had been unaccustomed to handle. A remark heard every once in a while in publishing offices is: "Our salesmen wouldn't know how to sell that book."

The journey of a book manuscript after it has been received in a publishing office varies with the office. Usually it first goes to one of a little staff of readers, persons who either do nothing else but read manuscript or who combine manuscript reading with writing publicity notes and advertising copy about books already published or about to be published by the house. Such persons are generally college bred and sometimes themselves have a tendency toward writing books or articles or poetry. It is not unusual in a publishing house for one of the traveling salesmen to be called upon every once in a while to give an opinion from his point of view of the advisability of accepting a manuscript. Occasionally a publisher's traveling man takes out to the buyer for a large book store, who is a good friend of his, a manuscript and asks for his judgment upon it. In some publishing houses, in the case of a manuscript of no distinctive literary qualities, the judgment of an "average mind", untainted by editorial sophistication, is sought; and the odd moments of intelligent young women secretaries and stenographers are employed in reading manuscript.

Doubtless every publishing house past the age of infancy has its awful family skeletons, darkly hinted at now and then as terrible warnings to its staff. Some of the most popular books within living memory have been turned down by very astute publishers, to go elsewhere to success; and some of the most gifted authors who later found high distinction.

Still, in the press of business, one (frequently brief) report from a reader on its character must needs suffice for many a book manuscript. Others draw maybe as many as half a dozen. In some large houses these reports are passed on by one man, the head of the editorial department, or, if the house has a magazine, the book editor. He may question the first reader's report on a manuscript, and send it out to another reader; or he

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may decide to reject the manuscript on the strength of that report. On the showing of a number of reports he may conclude to read the manuscript himself. On his own judgment of the manuscript he may reject it. Or he may advise the head of the house that the book be accepted.

In other publishing houses manuscript reports are taken up for final decision by a periodical gathering of various members of the firm, a cabinet or council meeting. In one house I know this tribunal is jocosely referred to by its members as "the Senate". In the case of the smaller and newer publishing houses the head of the house decides the matter, and is likely to do a considerable amount of his own manuscript reading. The heads of the larger houses, of course, have little time for looking at manuscripts, though now and then one of them examines something which he has cause to believe is of special concern to him.

In brief, the points considered by a first-rate publishing house in the decision concerning a manuscript are these: the suitability of the book to the list being prepared, the probability of its profitable publication, the probability of its making a striking success, the chance of its sale continuing for some time, whether the book would detract from the reputation of the house, or whether it would be an asset to the imprint of the house.

A book of verse, say, may be taken mainly because the list is short on verse. A book of essays, perhaps, may be declined mainly for the reason that several volumes of essays are already in train for early publication. A book of solid character, a biography, suppose, promising no very great immediate sale but an enduring one, is frequently a better literary "property", in the publishing term, than a novel of fairly wide popularity whose day is quickly over. Very reputable publishing houses have not been averse to accepting books reasonably well assured of a wide sale when they have quite realized that such books were of a quality below the standard of houses of their character. Several popular successes enable a publisher to carry on his list books much more creditable to his name but of limited sale. Now and again publishers of very business-like mind have accepted books which they felt proud to publish but which they knew would hardly pay for themselves. There have been occasions when a new author has submitted two manuscripts at the same time, one of which the publisher saw possibilities in, without having any faith in the other nor any regard for it; and when the publisher has agreed to take both books to secure the one and to gain a hold on the author's future work. Instances are not rare, of course, where the success of one book has led a publisher to accept earlier and inferior work of the author, which he would not have taken before. Writers rapidly coming forward sometimes are signed up by a publisher for several books ahead sight unseen. And cases are not infrequent where a publisher accepts one book and turns down the author's next. The ins and outs of publishing are a somewhat complicated business.

Book publishing houses have an even greater variety of rejection slips and form letters than have the magazine editors, and inexperienced writers are likely to find them also more misleading. A form letter may be printed, or either multigraphed or typewritten. A printed rejection slip is not the unkindest sort of cut, as

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so many who receive them seem to feel. It generally says very much the same thing as a form letter either multigraphed or typewritten. These are frequently misinterpreted by the receivers as being personal letters. And their exceedingly courteous wording sometimes causes elation. They mean nothing at all. The stereotyped phrase "read with interest" is the same sort of formality as "Very truly yours".

Vogues pass. Established writers die. It is to the interest of a publishing house, very much to the interest of a publishing house, to cultivate the good will of the potential authors of consequence of tomorrow. A special letter, not quite a form letter, usually is prepared in rejecting a manuscript which in the editor's judgment shows promise of work of possibility for the house. In the case of a manuscript of decidedly exceptional interest to the editor, he writes a genuinely friendly letter to the author, generally stating just why the work was declined.

Some book editors are much more encouraging rejecters than others. They put into their letters phrases of approval quoted from the readers' reports; and sometimes explain to the author just what they think ought to be done to make the rejected manuscript acceptable—somewhere.

Sometimes the reasons given for the declining of a manuscript are rather startling to the rejected author. A very good house one time received a manuscript dealing with society life in England. The editor sent the manuscript to a reader. The reader praised highly in her report the style, the plot, and other qualities, but made the statement that the author's accounts of society life in London were inaccurate. Without further examination, the editor returned the manuscript to the author with a fatherly note of advice, urging him to write only about the things with which he was familiar and explaining that the returned novel showed that the author was quite ignorant of English social life. As a fact, the author happened to be an English gentleman, who had spent a large part of his life in London society, and who had lived less than a year in the United States. So you can't always sometimes tell about editorial advice. Otherwise stated, accidents will happen in the best regulated families.

Manuscripts are repeatedly accepted with provisions. In the case of one of the most sensational of recent novels the author was required to delete certain portions of the manuscript, and to modify others. A highly successful mystery story of a couple of years ago was several times rearranged by the young author before it was completely satisfactory to the publishers. In its published form material which at first had stood well along in the story appeared as the opening chapter. And sometimes manuscripts are taken with the understanding that they are to be very rigorously edited in the publishing house.

True enough. One of the most prevalent errors going, however, among amateur writers, is the highly fallacious notion that faulty "technicalities" in a manuscript don't matter much if only you have good "ideas". "Oh, I don't think there's much in it, you know, if you only get a good idea," remarked one of the speakers in McFee's excellent satiric sketch "The Idea". It is remarkable the number of people aspiring to write who are firm in the belief that they have splen-

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did ideas but who are in similiar case with the man who sent along with his manuscript a letter telling the publishers to do to it whatever might be required in the way of grammar and punctuation, as he had "never been strong in clerical traits". In discussing rejected manuscripts, an editor observed the other day that certain defects in the work of young writers repeated themselves so often that it was quite possible to name some of the general outstanding faults. At the top of his list he put: "lack of training", "inability to give effective expression to thoughts and observations". Another editor, asked for his view of the trouble with most of the manuscripts that came to him, replied: "Defective craftsmanship."

Books are acquired by publishers in various ways. A young man achieves a name as a clever journalist and a popular following. First thing you know, a publisher seeks a book from him. A rumor arises that a statesman retired but the day before from the thick of things is writing an inside story of recent events. Several alert publishers look into this matter. A notable figure passes away. A distinguished writer associated with him throughout his career accepts a proposal to write his biography. An English novelist writes his American publisher that there is a young chap in London worth watching. A man who has made a considerable success with a book wants on his second book a greater advance against royalties than his first publishers are willing to pay; and is bid in elsewhere. And so on and so on. Not a large proportion of the books published are born of manuscripts which unheralded and unsolicited drift into editorial offices. But some of the most successful of books have turned up in that way.

When a book is accepted, or arranged for, a contract is drawn between the publishers and the author. The subject of contracts and copyrights and seeing a book through the press must go into a later article. A book is accepted, say, sometime early in the spring. It is "set", put into type. Galleys are read by the advertising department, and a description of the book prepared for the fall catalog of the house. A jacket for the book is designed. A number of "dummies" are made. A dummy of a book consists of a specimen cover of the volume enclosing a few of the opening pages printed as they will be in the finished volume, the rest of the pages blank paper.

Sometime during the summer the publisher's salesmen take the road. One covers the Pacific coast, another the middle west and the south, still another the smaller towns of New England—it is one of the larger publishing houses we are thinking of. Catalogs, dummies, and jackets of the forthcoming books are shown to the buyers of the book stores, and advance orders procured. Shortly before publication date another salesman rounds up New York and the other big cities of the East. All these salesmen have a pretty fair knowledge of the book, and are equipped with its "talking points".

Shortly before the date of publication paid advertising concerning the book is placed with magazines and newspapers. And the publicity department begins to send out to the book pages of the newspapers all over the country "literary notes" concerning the book and its author. On the date of publication somewhere probably between seventy-five and a hun-

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dred copies of the book are distributed free. Most of these are "review copies" sent to literary editors. The others are given to persons of influence in the book world who may be inclined to aid the book, by saying something about it which could be effectively used in advertising, or by giving it "word of mouth advertising" themselves.

That is a brief sketch of the manner in which a book is published today. Publish, the dictionary says, means: to make known publicly, to issue, to put in circulation, to disseminate. And this outline we have just followed through of the career of a manuscript from the time it arrives in a publishing office until the time when it appears as a book on the market may give some little notion of the amount of capital that is tied up every time a manuscript is accepted —though nothing has been said of printers, proof-readers, presses, binderies, stock rooms, accounting departments, and so on.

A word is to be said about books that are not brought out in the ordinary way, on a royalty basis, books privately printed, and books the publication of which is partly paid for by the authors. Books that are privately printed, of course, are not published at all, in the dictionary sense, because they have not behind them the elaborate machinery of an active publishing house. To have a book privately printed is generally more than anything else a practice calculated to minister to the vanity of the author; though now and then one comes across a privately printed volume of some value which perhaps could not have been brought out in any other way.

There remain to be considered what are known in the book trade as "author's books", volumes issued partly at the expense of their authors. Many people have an idea that this is not an honorable practice. Of course, there are a number of firms which make a business solely of encouraging the ignorant to let them "publish" their books. These firms ought to be run out of business. On the other hand, interesting and valuable books have been published at the expense of their authors simply because the sale of these books was obviously too limited to permit of their being published otherwise. And I have heard that one of the most popular authors in America today financed his first book.

There may be exceptional cases, but far and away in the main the author in such a transaction is without further satisfaction than that of seeing his book in print. In "The Writer's Monthly" for July, 1921, was presented a mass of testimony which, with one exception, unanimously pointed to the conclusion that a transaction of this sort was in every way unprofitable to the publishee.

In conclusion, a word of emphasis on the value of the imprint of an established publishing house upon a book. By having an established and well-known house put out his book the author assures himself of some publicity, of a fair distribution of the book, and a certain amount of prestige.

MURRAY HILL

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THE ABSENTEE NOVELISTS OF CANADA

By Isabel Paterson

WHAT makes a best seller? Why does it sell? Even editors admit they don't know: it sells because the public buys it. But they cautiously recommend novelty of scene as one desirable element. William Dean Howells has related how a young author brought him some commonplace short stories, and asked for advice on the best method of achieving literary eminence. Mr. Howells inquired if the aspirant was acquainted with any locality not then fictionized. It chanced that the young man knew at first hand the life of the lumbering regions of Michigan. "Then write about that," said Mr. Howells. The result was the great success of Stewart Edward White with "The Blazed Trail".

Now hardly a corner of earth remains unwritten. Novelists hire caravans, dog sledges, yachts, motors, and æroplanes to hunt down the elusive local color in its remotest lair. The Eskimos and the South Sea Islanders, Patagonia and China, yea, even Main Street, Gopher Prairie, have alike been exploited. Indeed, I do not know or know about any place in the wide world that hasn't been "done" in fiction, and done brown, except only my own, my native land, Canada.

One might therefrom infer that this gives the Canadian novelist, if any, a head start. Publishers ought to be waiting for such with open arms. But one can only reply with Tweedledee: "Contrariwise."

I remember well my own first fictional indiscretion. Nobody else does; it expired after the manner of Wordsworth's Lucy. It had only one reader besides myself, a publisher's reader, by whom it was rejected in due course —I had almost said in the course of nature. I do not complain of this. Not enough first novels are rejected. But the form and reason of the rejection are worthy of note.

"This is not the kind of novel we expect from the Canadian west," quoth the sapient critic.

That publisher had his mind firmly made up as to the sort of fiction he would permit to emulate Young Lochinvar. He might not know anything about the Canadian west, but he knew what he liked.

This is why Canada still offers an almost virgin field to the novelist. The romancer, with the enterprise and hardihood of his tribe, got there first. This is greatly to the romancer's credit. The novel is the child of romance. Mlle. de Scudéry made the French novel possible by writing about Persia. But a Persian novelist would probably have found some difficulty in getting a hearing after her. Most likely he would have had to write about France. And the imaginary portrait of Canada produced by similar absent treatment has solidified into a cliché, and is taken as a standard for all later efforts. If they are different, then they must be wrong. What that means may be appreciated by an American novelist if he will

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imagine his work being measured against "René" or even "The Last of the Mohicans", and censured for differing from those excellent but rather passé models.

Ray Long recently called Canada "the last frontier of romance". He really meant James Oliver Curwood, who is not exactly Canada. Why must we be romantic if we do not want to be? And especially if we just ain't? Romance is not a place, anyhow; it's a state of mind, as Kipling long ago pointed out.

Up to the last ten years the western United States had to be romantic or nothing. Hamlin Garland has recorded his difficulties in getting the west he knew into print. No doubt there was romance in the west. Remington and Russell drew what they saw. Owen Wister and Stewart Edward White did not have to call on imagination overmuch; many of the jests they wrote down were known from the Rio Grande to the Peace River. (Will Rogers, with his dry, careless wit, his unjaded eye, his poise and pungency, is the concentrated essence of the "romantic west", if you like to call it that. Seeing him sandwiched between Dolores and the Dolly Sisters in a Ziegfeld revue, one ponders the word). But White and Wister were just in time to see the curtain fall. B. M. Bower gives her hero an æroplane now instead of a bronco. The old west has vanished as utterly as the America of Châteaubriand's day—which at that had little resemblance to the Arcadian wilderness through which René took his melancholy pilgrimage. Willa Cather may write of the true romance of Nebraska's farms, Sinclair Lewis can show the drabness of Gopher Prairie, without fear of rebuke.

But when the vogue of the strictly made-in-U.S.A. western tale began to decline — possibly because too many people had begun to winter in California and see America first—the romancers moved their imaginary location north of Forty-nine, out of the way of traffic, and resumed business as usual. This became most amusingly palpable when Mr. Belasco, deciding to revive "The Girl of the Golden West", followed the fashion, transferred the scene to Canada, and renamed the play "Tiger Rose".

So, as two bodies cannot occupy the same space at the same time, and with the present high price of white paper, the machine-made romanticism of the Absentee Novelists holds the boards while the real drama of Canadian life must wait out in the alley.

It is none too easy at best to write about a new country. There are no handy short cuts to mass psychology, background, or general characteristics. In a novel of English life, observe how the author is aided to precision and richness of texture by the reader's previous knowledge of England's history and social structure. Say that a character comes of "county people", and his antecedents for generations back are explicitly defined. His immediate condition, both social and financial, may be indicated by a single word, such as Belgravia or Mayfair, Whitechapel or Limehouse. Name the Derby, a Drawing room (with a big D), St. Stephen's, the Row, even anything so generic as a "country house", and the Constant Reader may truthfully exclaim: "I have never been in England; it's as if I saw it all." It is this which largely enables the English novel to give an effect of greater depth and significance than an American story of equal merit. No minted wealth awaits the social biographer of a new

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country. He must quarry from the living rock, extract his gold from the ore. And in Canada, unless he pays tribute of conformity to the Absentee Novelists who draw their imaginative revenues thence, he is in danger of peremptory eviction. Not only does he lack a literary tradition in his favor, he finds one dead against him.

It is all very tantalizing, for in addition to novelty Canada has another remarkable attraction for beginning novelists. It is thickly infested with characters from English novels, whose creators have no more use for them. English writers send these superfluous ones to Canada when they haven't the heart to kill them off, precisely as English families send their useless or unmanageable sons thither. I do not know how long ago this began; but one of Ouida's heroes spent a brief while in garrison at Quebec, whence he used to sally forth and shoot buffaloes. He went back to England despite the allurements of sport; but few are so fortunate. And there is seldom any hint as to the ultimate fate of these poor transported ones. A Canadian author too indolent to create for himself might meet them at the dock and start them on fresh adventures, nem. con. Perchance it was one of these exiles who founded the Adare family in Halifax, whence Basil King's heroine of "The High Heart" traced her descent. It is difficult to account for the lady otherwise, even though Halifax was once a garrison town and they were "the fighting Adares". (They must have fought among themselves in Halifax; it is a peaceful city by ordinary.) Officers seldom found "families" at their temporary garrisons, even though we have it on good authority that the soldier is an absent-minded beggar and likely to leave a lot of little things behind him. But if the first Adare was sent to Halifax by a British novelist, he had to stay.

The very newest British writers have discovered other uses for Canada than as a literary oubliette. H. G. Wells, seeing no other solution for "Marriage" (except divorce, which has grown banal), sent the Traffords to Labrador, to adjust their relations without disturbing the neighbors. Frank Swinnerton's young man, in "Nocturne", offered as a special inducement to take his girl to Alaska. Somerset Maugham picked on Manitoba as a fitting place for his hero to behave like a brute without being put out of countenance by his environment. Then he called it "The Land of Promise". I do not know if Manitoba ever saw the play, or what it thought of the implication. I do not even know what the implication was, or rather, whether it related to Englishmen or Manitoba.

But this is merely incidental. The real difficulty lies with those who profess to write of Canada as such.

Canadian fiction had a fair beginning, though small and localized. "The Golden Dog" was not without merit. And Dr. Drummond caught something of the habitant in verse, though concerned with little save his lighter sentiment and humor. Now "the wild ass stamps o'er their head, but cannot break their sleep". Sir Gilbert Parker owns the old homestead, and lives in London on the income from it, after remodeling it into a factory for the production of French-Canadian "types", with side lines of stage Irishmen, English younger sons, and a pretty girl or so, all neatly turned in wood; a complete cast for stock melodrama now that he has lately added a gipsy. He has no Canadians yet. Harold Bindloss

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has secured a concession nearby, which he manages with a more modest staff—one English girl, one Canadian ditto, two varieties or sub-species of English hero, a villain, and supers taken on as needed, white or Indian. Yet he has extracted two novels a year from the fertile Canadian soil, at his busiest. Possibly this part of the comparison is unfair to other authors; Harold Bindloss may be a syndicate.

James Oliver Curwood staked out his claim at a respectful distance from these old established firms; but he carries on the tradition in the grand manner. His specialty is the mysterious heroine who is pursued, like Eliza crossing the ice, over leagues on leagues of frozen prairie and impenetrable forest by a dark and desperate villain, to be rescued in the last chapter by a bewildered but trustful hero. Mr. Curwood also employs a few half-breeds, and calls in the Mounted Police when necessary. As these appear to be the sole inhabitants of his Canada, when he feels they are entitled to a rest he writes about bears and wolf dogs and dog wolves.

Mrs. Humphry Ward competed once; but "Lady Merton, Colonist" (or "Canadian Born") should not be scrutinized too closely, for politeness's sake. It was a bread and butter letter, and answered the description admirably.

It is curious to consider that while Canada has produced or nurtured several writers who have succeeded in popular fiction, they have not concerned themselves much with Canada. Arthur Stringer usually turns elsewhere for a theme—although "The Prairie Wife" is an excellent example of long-distance writing. The hero is a Scotchman and the heroine an American girl. Agnes Laut wrote some Canadian stories which were sufficiently stereotyped, yet she had too much regard for historical fact. But Ralph Connor redresses the balance, and redeems our native scribes from the charge of thriftless bartering of their birthright. Winnipeg serves him as well as London to provide the glamour of distance, and where Parker and Bindloss have sold their thousands he has sold his tens of thousands. His militant gospeleers and iron-jawed Mounted Police are driven to the last gasp of productiveness in the way of thrills and cash.

And this fancy dress picture of a whole nation is taken quite seriously. Recently Walter Prichard Eaton put in a story a Canadian soldier, specified as hailing from Edmonton. His origin was indicated by making him add an apologetic "as you Americans say" to the phrase "I'm from Missouri". Also as we Albertans used to say, until it became outmoded in favor of newer American slang. It may be unkind to mention this, like telling a child there is no Santa Claus; Mr. Eaton might prefer to cling to his belief in a romantic Edmonton of Hudson Bay factors and beautiful half-breeds and noble young Mounted Police, altogether much more a "fit nurse for a heroic child" than a city with vaudeville and movies and magazines to keep it up to date in the matter of catch phrases.

If Canada had any literary centre, even and especially in the commercial sense in which New York is the literary centre of the United States, this condition would remedy itself. People like to read about themselves; that is why "Main Street" sold so enormously; even Good Queen Bess went to her mirror, however roundabout and however much she hated the

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tale it told. But our magazines, such as they are, cannot compete with the American magazines. Our publishers cannot dictate to the American and English houses whence they must draw the bulk of their supplies. A prize has lately been offered for the "best Canadian novel", but one observes that it is offered by an English firm, Hodder and Stoughton. It is a fine thing that they should do so, and it will certainly stimulate Canadian authors; but observe also that the amount of the prize is but $2,500; for *all rights*. This is no reflection on the generosity of Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton; they may easily lose money by the venture. But compare it with the ten thousand dollars which is the conventional sum for an American publisher to put up for such a competition; or even the thousand pounds more than once paid for an English prize novel; and one perceives why purely Canadian fiction does not roll from the presses: the supply is regulated by the demand.

Considering all this, it will be interesting to see the prize novel when it appears. One must not expect too much; the merit of the choice must be limited by the offerings, and not entirely by the taste of the judges; but surely it should bring forth something different, something native and homespun. The editor of "McLean's Magazine", I believe, is one of the judges; and his magazine's fiction hitherto, when not second-hand Robert Chambers or the like, has run to the good old standardized type, wild west, Mounted Police, outlaws, and that sort of thing. And Hodder and Stoughton themselves can hardly help applying an English viewpoint. But still—it will be interesting.

The best *recent* Canadian novel would have been barred by the entrance conditions, as it was written by a Frenchman. Yet "Maria Chapdelaine" is certainly and entirely a Canadian novel; it has the very flavor of the soil of Quebec, and moves with the long rhythm and quiet power of nature's seasons in the northern wilderness. It is limited by its theme, a simple and homely story of a habitant girl's brief youth and lost love, in the very backwoods of the old province; but it would be an excellent thing if that fine simplicity, devoid alike of bombast, sentimentality, and melodrama, should strike a keynote for Canadian fiction.

The public and the critics of Canada seldom fail to welcome anything even remotely Canadian in fiction. Certainly it is unfortunate that the most widely circulated Canadian newspaper regards even literature through the jaundiced eye of politics, and politics of that peculiarly provincial kind known as Imperial. That is the Montreal "Family Herald and Weekly Star", whose book reviews are evidently written by the late* Hugh Graham's maiden aunt, who reads through a Victorian lorgnette, alert for everything but the literary merit of the work in hand. She is a heresy hunter rather than a critic; and conceives it her duty to rebuke Stephen Leacock for being humorous (on the subject of constitutional monarchs), and P. G. Wodehouse for writing about Englishmen (taking him for an American!), and less well-known writers for doing anything at all; these judgments being delivered with a crushing finality reminiscent of the late dear Queen's "We are not amused".

*Not dead, but translated like Enoch to a higher sphere; he has been rewarded for his services to democracy by a peerage and is now known as Lord Atholstan.

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But this is a notable exception. Most of our reviewers are if anything too kind to native talent. A little criticism might be stimulating. It stimulated Byron, for example.

What it might make of the raw material now available in Canada I should not dare predict. One does not foresee any further development for L. M. Montgomery. Her spun sugar creations are immaterial to the progress of the Canadian novel. Immensely popular though they are, they cannot even do any harm, because the peculiar kind of very real talent needed to confect such pleasant and pretty trifles is much rarer than the mechanical ingenuity and platitudinous piety required for a Bindloss or a Ralph Connor; therefore she can form no "school". Albert Hickman's "Canadian Nights" were moderately good stories, but not especially Canadian. Robert J. Stead is so much like Bindloss at his worst that I cannot guess if he is a Canadian at all. Frances Fenwick Williams has used Montreal only as a backdrop.

Isabel Ecclestone Mackay is by odds the most promising Canadian novelist, and she is happily the most authentic. She knows her subject from the inside, yet preserves the detachment afforded by a sense of humor. It is impossible to define atmosphere, but she has captured it. If her facile gift of plot and too amiable optimism (which leads her to prefer not only the bright side but the tepid shallows of life) do but ripen into a natural development of her keen feeling for character, instead of a set of puppet wires for it, she will go far. And her last novel ("The Window Gazer") gives promise of this by its very lack of the technical finish which, for instance, her "Up the Hill and Over" displayed. It reads as if written under a new impulse, which did not quite break through but at least succeeded in upsetting the prearranged pattern; the heroine is alive, even though not exactly kicking; she leaves one speculating what she really *would* have done in real life.

Stephen Leacock's "Sunshine Sketches" contains more of Canada, though it be but a small corner, than all the novels of all the novelists to date. But his omnivorous and amused interest in the passing show of events will never permit him to confine himself to the rigid and personal limits of a novel; and perhaps it would be a pity if he did. There are always more novelists than humorists.

As for me, I'm going to write about New York.

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THE JOURNAL OF TIMOTHY TUBBY

Being the American Diary of the Famous British Novelist

With Notes by Theresa Tubby

And Sketches by Golomy Burch

PREFACE

I WAS attending a small tea not long after my arrival in America at the home of one of your Wall Street magnates. (The house was decorated in surprisingly good taste.)[1] The tea was well served. I noticed, particularly, that the servants were English. (The livery was excellently chosen.) Indeed, one of your most charming American characteristics is, that in spite of a certain fundamental awkwardness which is native and, I must say, compelling, you learn *quickly*. Yes! the tea made me feel as though I were in dear Theresa's father's drawing room on Downing Street talking to my old friend Doddy.[2] When I was invited to this affair I had, of course, no intention of making a speech; but Mrs. W., our hostess, pressed me so warmly to tell her guests a bit about literary London, that I could not refrain, so I chatted for an hour and a half on my first impressions of the New York skyline. What magnificent structures your skyscrapers are! How they lift the heart toward Heaven—like the most delicate of French pastries against a sunset sky.

Speaking of skylines calls to my mind the momentous day when our ship steamed into New York harbor. What a harbor! An excellent friend of mine in your metropolis, who handles my literary business for me, had apparently let slip some slight word of my approach, so that several reporters met us at quarantine. My wife was charmed by their naïveté.[3] Having saved a snifter for the occasion, we all enjoyed a quiet drink. It was then, during one of the intervals in Theresa's conversation with these bluff but nevertheless attractive gentlemen (your press has treated me so well that I most certainly could say nothing against them), that a young man named Broun who seemed to be a sort of ring leader,[4] turned to me and said, "I once read a book of yours, Mr. Tubby." Think of that! This was a welcome extraordinary to America. My heart was so warmed by his words and by my haste to give him another drink that I quite forgot to ask him which book he had read or, indeed, whether or no he cared for my somewhat unusual style.

It was at Mrs. W.'s tea that Angela Porter (she has a lovely face and is artistic in some way — I forget

1 Poor Timothy, his æsthetic sense is lacking. It was a shocking house. *Thr. Tb.*

2 The Rt. Hon. Cecil Doddering.

3 What flatterers your American young men are! Remember, my friends, that to flatter a woman over thirty is as dangerous as to kiss one under twenty. *Thr. Tb.*

4 We later learned that he was strangely influential in certain literary circles.

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whether she sings or dances[5]) came to me. "Mr. Tubby", she said, "you will write a book on America, won't you?" Now until that moment, I confess that it had never occurred to me. I hesitated. She went on, "Your power of observation is so keen and your books are becoming so popular, a critique of our manners from you would be of inestimable value to so young a nation."

It was then that I promised to write this book, feeling a certain duty in the matter. If an apology is necessary, I make it now. Should I seem to criticize, I know that the public which has been so generous in its attendance and applause of my lectures will forgive. A strong lusty child should not mind an occasional beating. Then, why should a nation so hearty, so virile in its possibilities as America, take offense at kindly criticism from one who is, after all, one of the parent stock; for you must never forget that you are our child. So, while making no very definite apologies for my criticism, I do not want, for an instant, to alienate even one member of my dear American public.

My wife's notebook, her knowledge of social usage among English peers, and her great love for me and interest in my work, has made her assistance desirable. It was not my own wish that her biographical note on me should introduce this volume; but the club women of America, who have been more than appreciative of me, have, figuratively, risen in a body to demand some explanation of my great popularity. As my wife's cousin Teddy[6] might have said, "A plain statement of truth about one's self should never be considered egotism." For this reason I now, for a few pages, ask you to read what my wife has to say about me. She will tell you, humbly enough, of my early career, of our courtship, of our marriage, and of the greatest decision of our life—to make a three months' trip to the United States.

Faithfully always, my American friends,

T. TUBBY.

5 She dances. Her features are as ugly as a hedgehog; but her figure is excellent. Tubby's memory plays him tricks. A man's memory is often lucky in its lapses. *Thr. Tb.*

6 The Hon. Theodore Cobbler of Bolgy House.

Burnhouse, Sussex.
January, Nineteen Hundred and
Twenty-Two.

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"I was attending a small tea"

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CHAPTER 1

My Husband's Rise To Fame

I DOUBT if anyone but myself and the Duke of Ledham has, up to this very moment, realized that my famous novelist husband's father was a blacksmith. I am proud to proclaim it. I remember when I told the Duke, that irrepressible old wit. Alas! there is no one else who knew the young Theresa Turbot as did he! Shall I ever forget that night in the arbor?

THERESA *(languidly):* Well, Leddy, I'm marrying.

LEDDY: My heart is broken, Terry.

THERESA: It's a novelist, Leddy.

LEDDY: May his career be dedicated to writing of you, my dear.

THERESA *(with a flick of scarlet feather fan):* Tush!—and his father was a blacksmith.

LEDDY: Let him mend the broken hearts of your suitors, Terry, and strengthen the wasting physique of the Turbots.

Great Heavens! What impudence! I slapped his cheek soundly; but being an exceedingly high-spirited girl, really loved him all the more. He was wrong concerning the Turbot family. His elaborate show of democracy led him into this silly error. My father[7] was a tall and sturdy man, with a sweet smile and a rotten temper, a cricketer, too, in his time; and my brother Tom, though he has none of my perseverance and only fifty per cent of my charm, could scarcely be called a weakling. I'll grant Leddy this—that the infusion of a nip of blacksmith won't hurt the bluest blood.

This contretemps took place in the famous arbor at Blaze, our ancestral home. How well I remember those great winding stairs at Blaze and how I used to scandalize the archbishops and even the curate by sliding down the banisters. Shall I ever forget the incident of the cat? It was my first manifestation of the famous Turbot cruelty. Of my later indulgences those who can best tell you are Sir Harry Bunn, Arthur Plimpty, and that gouty old renegade, the Duke of Gulp.

The cat was black. I forget its sex; but then, I was only four. I was standing at the top of the dark stairs looking down. I suppose that my Italian governess was in the garden, my French day nurse in the nursery, and my German night tutor safely in bed. Above me loomed a portrait of the first Earl of Turbot, booted and spurred, with his hounds at his heels. Along came the cat, purring contentedly. Something possessed me. Perhaps it was the old earl's spirit, hovering near the portrait. I do not know. At any rate, I seized the poor pussy by her tummy and flung her down below me. She lay very still. Then, like a humble little child, as indeed I was, I sat down over my handiwork and wept softly at first, then more violently. The handsome young stable boy found me there. He gave me a cheap cigarette, and to comfort me showed me how to smoke. This was a great day in my life.

I have forgotten Timothy, for the moment. Speaking, however, of his

7 James, the late Earl of Turbot.

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rise to fame, the following anecdote serves to show one reason for his success. We had been walking down Piccadilly, and over tea at Claridge's were discussing Timothy's new nervous breakdown, when Lilly Darnley joined us. She hates me because she once copied one of my gowns and knows that I saw her wearing it at that scandalous garden party at Tip House on the night of the Duke of Cadley's murder. (Before me now I have a letter which the world has never seen: dated, signed, which the world will never see. It refers to the poor dear Duke's sixth love affair. Alas! One may still see *her* selling violets on the Embankment.)

LILLY *(trenchantly):* At last Tubby has a successful book.

THERESA *(behind her cup):* We are so glad that you consider it a success.

LILLY *(with widening eyes):* How much he has learned of women!

TIMOTHY *(behind his toast):* I'm so glad you think so.

LILLY: And how much like you, my dear, his dialog sounds.

TIMOTHY *(eagerly):* You *did* notice it? I'm so proud. I write down every single one of her bons mots in my little blue notebook which she gave me on my last birthday.

The other reason for Timothy's success is obvious enough. You have only to turn to the frontispiece to know. Unlike most novelists, my Tubby is handsome. What he lacks in briskness of wit, he more than makes up in fineness of feature. Oh yes! He is far better looking and better dressed than Hugh Walpole, Arnold Bennett, or even your own Joseph Hergesheimer. One of your younger writers, a bubbling fellow not long left his twentieth year, has something of Timothy's wistful beauty. I forget the young man's name. He writes verses, too, if I remember correctly. I met him at a ball at the Ritz. Like all Americans, he promptly made love to me.[8]

This characteristic of Timothy's called forth the following pathetic epistle:

DEAR, DEAR MRS. TUBBY:

My husband, too, as you know, is a novelist. My life is one sadness after another; not that I blame him, poor dear. He's easily influenced and so attractive. It's part of his living to speak at women's clubs—and that explains it.

You, however, manage Mr. Tubby so well. He is gracious, without being flirtatious, and seems never to leave your side. A word of advice from you might mend a breaking heart.

Affectionately,

M.

I wrote Mrs. M. My letter was twelve pages in all, so I quote only a part.

"You poor dear; but I think you must remember this. If you would hold your husband, never let him be bored. Fight with him, if necessary; but don't let things drift. Now, he's not particularly good-looking, and his personality is anything but pleasing; therefore, the only reason that the women flock to him, is because he's famous. Make him realize this gradually. Push him into a violent attachment for some silly fool who you know will throw him over as soon as he be-

8 In looking over my American papers I ran across the following verse. That young man sent it to me with a bunch of violets and lilies of the valley. It is curiously illiterate, yet the boy is well known in America. This is one of the literary phenomena of which we shall speak later.

Oncet I met a English dame
I seen her at a dance,
I gotta get that dame, I says,
I gotta take a chance.

I ast her fer a kiss, I did,
She gave her mit, the goose,—
If that's a kiss in London,
I asks yer—What's the use?

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gins chasing her. Most of these lion-worshiping ladies simply want to ride their lion and use the whip once or twice in public. After they've displayed their prowess, they lose interest in the lion. It's not difficult to make a fool of *your husband*, my dear. I could have done it myself, only I was too fond of you. Hold the mirror up to him. Show him that his one asset is his writing ability, and his only chance of happiness, you.

"Also, do not hesitate to create a certain amount of jealousy in his own breast. You probably remember seeing me at Mrs. Tommy Grave Carter's studio party last December in New York. I sat next Porter Trace, and he kissed me quite brazenly. What a genius you Americans have for public embracing. Now Porter is a bore, and for some reason his wife did not speak to me a week later when I met her at that stupid old fool's, Mrs. Tusted-Eager's. However, that event served its purpose; for Timothy was particularly tender with his little attentions that evening.

"I remember the first time that I was ever introduced to the Dowager Duchess of Dux. It was the year I came out. I hadn't been too popular. My tongue was too sharp. In later years I have learned to use it only on those who make worthy enemies. It is useless, my dear, to kill mere mice, when there are rats in the house. The old duchess was wearing black satin. She was short and pudgy in those days and the great loose folds of her many chins gave her an odd look. I had just been presented to her by Claxton Ewberry, whose mother had forced him to attend me that day. He was a stupid boy, with a chronic blush, had matured early, lived late, and was much the worse for wear. She sent him scurrying across the room to talk with Prissy Toms.[9] Then she looked at me. Her eyes were cold blue, beady, and piercing.

"DUX: You're unhappy, young lady, because you're unpopular.

"THERESA: Why—I suppose—

"DUX *(irritably)*: Of course you are. You talk too much.

"THERESA *(anxiously)*: What shall I do?

"DUX: Talk less and use your eyes more.

"It's good advice, Mrs. M., and both you and your husband would profit by it. My last word to you is this. Try to dissuade him from writing sex novels. There are other subjects, if not so appealing, at least worthy of his attention. The interest of the club women will lag as soon as they cease trying to find out whether the experiences he relates in his stories are real or imaginary. Then, too, the growing effectiveness of Prohibition (a barbarous law, isn't it?) should aid you."

A silly woman, Mrs. M., and most unappreciative. She never even thanked me for my efforts in her behalf. American women will ask advice of anyone concerning their husbands; but they don't like to be told the truth about themselves.

I was writing, however, of my husband's career. Probably the thing which contributed more to its success than any one other[10] was the fact that all the members of our family, when we were young together at Blaze, used to play literary games. This, you see, prepared me for a literary husband. We were taught to respect poets and authors of other varieties. We did not class them with ordinary

9 The eldest daughter of Lady Ardella Drear, of Drearcombe.

10 Except, of course, my marriage to dear Theresa. *Tim. Tb.*

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A Portrait of Theresa on Her Father's Downs

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tradespeople, as do some members of your American aristocracy (whatever that means!). I overheard a most interesting conversation recently at an afternoon tea in a certain house on Park Avenue. A rather young New York editor, Mr. Smirk, whose manners suffer somewhat from his country rearing, was being quizzed by a stout society lady, Mrs. Blurr.

MRS. BLURR: I no longer allow my daughter to associate with your friend Mr. Bustle.

MR. SMIRK: And why is that, Mrs. Blurr?

MRS. BLURR *(high-toning him):* She's just made her début and is so innocent and you know he is occasionally seen with an actress and lives in Greenwich Village. Do you blame me?

MR. SMIRK *(obsequiously):* Of course not! Do you know, though, I'm so worried about my young cousin who is an actor and whose mother has asked me to watch his morals.

MRS. BLURR *(amazed):* Your cousin, an actor! And why should you worry about *his* morals, pray!

MR. SMIRK *(turning away):* He's been seen with a débutante, Mrs. Blurr.

I have never been able to understand the American attitude toward the morals of artists. The only difference between the life of an actor and the life of a millionaire is that an actor parades his follies and a millionaire keeps them under cover until his wife displays them in the divorce courts.

Well, these literary games of ours *were* entertaining. One we had called *Tittleteetum.* We played it with toothpicks, which we borrowed from the servants' quarters. I shall never forget Papa's dismay when he saw me using one. "I'd far rather you'd take six drinks of Scotch", he said, "than use one toothpick." Each toothpick represented a famous line of poetry, and the game was to guess the name of the poet by the arrangement of the toothpicks. You may imagine that it was difficult, but that it was possible you may believe from the fact that I always won; and brother Tom occasionally made a lucky guess, in spite of his stupidity.

This brings me to an account of the day when I first met Tubby. He was wearing a blue tie with red spots. I have always been proud of his taste in neckwear. It was at a dinner given by the Algeltons.[11] Being merchants of a sort, they collect the literary. I knew at once that I would force him to propose to me, though at that time I had not decided to accept him. However, I immediately bought his books, and that decided me. There was a soul in them that one does not see in the man himself.

To make a long story short—for it *was* a long story, getting Tubby to propose—we were married amid much gossip three months later. To assuage your curiosity I'll tell you how I did it. How curious you Americans are!

TIMOTHY: I do so want to pay a visit to America. I hear they treat the Indians badly.

THERESA: Why don't you?

TIMOTHY: I don't like to go alone.

THERESA: Why don't you take someone?

TIMOTHY *(embarrassed):* Would you like to visit America?

THERESA: Yes—but I think we'd better marry first.

Now you have the true story of our trip to the United States.

11 The Newberry Algeltons, manufacturers of the Algelton bottles.

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SPINNING YARNS FOR JOE

By Charles Phelps Cushing

WRITERS as a class are an ungrateful and obstinate lot, as I know right well from having served several dreary sentences at editorial desks. And probably no writers are more like the army mule in temperament than those who, like myself, take up short story writing with a hazy notion that something is wrong with popular fiction, and that this "something" might easily be corrected.

After two years of hard labor at this type of writing, attempting to spin yarns for the amusement of Ring W. Lardner's derby-hatted friend, "the common American citizen, whom we shall call Joe", I yet feel that something is wrong. And so, for that matter, do a great many editors of popular magazines — keen, practical critics whose sense of values, and (what goes with it) whose sense of humor, are often underrated by the long-faced Young Intellectuals of Greenwich Village.

Once I had rolled up my shirt sleeves and pitched into actual writing, I got that first cockiness knocked out of me in short order. The deeper I got into this game, which to a spectator had looked so simple, the more the difficulties multiplied. The Kingdom of Popular Fiction, like the British Empire, appears to have no definite constitution. Moreover, the laws of both lands are being altered constantly on popular demand; and these laws, in both instances, are voluminous and perplexing to interpret. They stagger the student not only by their number and their complexity, but also by the exceptions that can be made to any or all of their clauses. Every rule you try to formulate for fiction can be disproved by some striking contradiction; and the most obvious justice can often be defeated by a sentimental plea to the jurybox.

Yes, something is wrong with popular fiction—but it is not something easy to correct. Too many traditions and old associations and stubborn traits of human nature are involved, too many inborn popular passions and prejudices and tribal taboos.

From a seat in the grandstand the spectators catch no glimmering of the number and complexity of the rules of the game. Yet, if they would pause and ponder, it ought to stand to reason that if producing short stories that truly delight our friend Joe were as easy to do as appearances betoken, there would not be so few writers who are paid $2,000 or upward for a 10,000 word narrative.

Our Young Intellectuals choose to regard popular fiction as vaudeville, but they ought to recognize that even the performers in a variety show have to know a good deal about human nature and have to be able to "put their act across" with some sort of histrionic skill to demand a $2,000 wage for their turn.

Dozens of Joe's lesser known favorites among American short story writers receive checks for $500 or more for manuscripts of no more word-footage than a newspaper space

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writer can turn out for $50 in a single day. These prices, evidently, are fixed by the law of supply and demand; the short story writer produces a piece of copy ten times as difficult to write as the product of the newspaper man.

For a while, like all the rest of my tribe, I went on flaunting the "magazine formula" as boldly as possible. But finally, smarting under the "discipline of demand", I had a change of heart. It occurred to me then that American short story writers usually evince themselves too obstinate and non-conformist when they are apprentices; then too docile and orthodox once they have attained a measure of financial success. My resolve was to try to reverse this process—to be tractable as an apprentice, then to break loose like a Kipling later and smash the idols of the sanctums right and left. Pro tem., I would obey orders with as much grace as possible.

Frank Moore Colby's advice to genius in his book on "Imaginary Obligations" is to "let the great soul go crashing forth", but he is fair-minded enough to grant that the trouble with the run of us is not what he calls "deliberate heterophemy", but the fact that we have nothing great to hide.

And that is the way your present witness, looking back upon his beginner's attempts at fiction, now calmly views the situation. He perceives that he was too ambitiously striving to fight at a ringside weight which he is never likely to scale; and that the wholesome but painful "discipline of demand" battered him back into his proper class. The welts on his head and shoulders went away in time without leaving any scars, and he believes now that he is a better craftsman (who never could have become an artist) for having undergone Grub Street's course of vigorous hazing.

After he had gone through about a year of apprenticeship, he sat down one afternoon and tried to sum up briefly the first few lessons taught him, by letters of rejection, concerning the demands of the popular markets:

(1) Don't try to sell unpleasant themes to popular magazines.

(2) The hero must "rise to honorable heights" of victory or of sacrifice.

(3) The strength of a popular plot is conflict, not complications; and the plot most desired is one that while leaving a pleasant taste in the reader's mouth afterward, manages to harrow his emotions considerably by the way.

(4) Attention to form is demanded—a simple and clear-cut narrative structure preferred.

(5) Also a certain polish of style, even though that polish may sometimes justly be described as a "cheap" one.

These were all lessons for the primary grade, some of them hard for the novice to accept with relish. But what was soon to follow was even more bewildering, more paradoxical and tough to chew. For the next lesson I was to learn in this rough and tumble schoolroom was that closely related to the demand for a certain polish of style goes a strong insistence that writers make their stories sound convincingly "realistic".

At this point the struggling novice finds himself desperately in sympathy with the mood of Emerson the day that elder sage of Concord sighed to Thoreau:

> Who would not like to write something which all can read, like "Robinsoe Crusoe"? And who does not see with regret that his page is not solid with a right materialistic treatment which delights everybody?

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Reflecting upon the passage, it struck me then that Daniel Defoe was the only one of the celebrated pioneers of fiction who could step down into the popular market place of today and write yarns for Joe at the top rates of current market quotations.

What seemed to be most in demand, as I then attempted to formulate it in brief, was "real people, doing real things, in a real world". Yet I soon sensed that something must be wrong with that definition, for the first reaction I got upon the first test work of my laboratory produced under this formula was a terse letter of rejection which ran:

> Not at all our kind of thing. For . . . we want strong emotional stuff, with plenty of romance, nothing sordid or commonplace.

I was still puzzling over this note, for I never had suspected this magazine of specializing in romance, when I was invited to dinner one night in a locality I rarely visit—Greenwich Village. The definition still harassed me, so I found occasion, over the demitasse cups, to spring it: "Real people, doing real things, in a real world." A young lady not kindly disposed toward anything "popular" considered the idea maliciously for a moment and then revised it. "You mean", she corrected, "real *good* people, doing real *good* things, in a real *good* world."

Not often does your witness accept the opinions of the Village meekly, particularly those that have a sneer in them. But this correction stuck in his craw. Anxious to get a really candid and expert judgment on the matter as quickly as possible, he posted a special delivery letter to his old comrade at arms, the Leatherneck, one of Joe's prime favorites, who appropriately enough dwells in a mountain lodge in the Far West. By return mail the Leatherneck replied, and to the experimenter's great amazement sided in his judgment with Greenwich Village. For he declared:

> The lady down in Greenwich Village was right—in spite of the sarcastic viewpoint that particular spot likes to take about everything that normal people like.
>
> What those birds always forget, however, is that in nearly any evening paper there is all the blood and scandal and calamity and sorrow that the average consumer wants. You can find murder, horror, creeps, disaster, failures, general debility and all female ailments in any edition.
>
> But how much stuff do you find there that you'd like to have echoed in your own life, denouements such as you'd like to have visited upon yourself if you were up against obstacles or deep in trouble?
>
> None!
>
> The hero of the evening paper gets roughly and promptly chucked into the jug, or has his throat cut or his epiglottis burned out. That's what Greenwich Village wants to write—to leave the corpse of our hero eaten up with loathsome disease, or floating down the river, and the heroine on the operating table as a result [deleted in deference to Mr. Sumner and the new postmaster general].
>
> In any event you are left to gather that it's a hell of a world, and about to come to an end tomorrow morning.
>
> Is there anything worth while in that? Why should an editor of a would-be-popular magazine pay $500 for a yarn like that when they're being ticked out down in Park Row by cub reporters for the wages of a ribbon counter clerk?
>
> Nope. That kind of realism comes cheap—because it's mighty easy to do. But the realism of popular fiction is a blame sight harder and a whole lot more worth while. *Popular fiction is our dreams come true*, and every dream has a happy ending. Either the dream is all right—or we wake up just in time if it's a nightmare. Isn't it the same way with a good short story for the populars, the kind of yarn an editor will pay a good price for?

So let Greenwich Village enjoy what triumph it may. Lesson No. 6 reads that what is most marketable in the way of realism is "real good people, doing real good things, in a real good world". That plainly is what the editor thinks that Joe, the common American citizen, most desires.

Such editorial preferences as these, please note, are not based necessarily upon the personal tastes of the man who does the buying of manuscripts. Theodore Dreiser, for example, when he was working for Street and Smith,

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may have had supressed desires to buy a different type of material than the kind he chose to publish. It is all simply a matter of commercial competition in capturing readers, and a competition to please a public of confirmed newspaper addicts, persons who in the view of such an expert as the Leatherneck, sorely need an antidote for the "sordid and commonplace" view of life presented by the afternoon editions. The preferences and the bans of the popular magazines—and nobody knows just how many of these bans there are—all are based upon what editors judge that Joe is most eager to devour. Theoretically, Joe is the dictator; the editor only an eye and an ear, Joe's purchasing agent.

No really terse statement of the nature of all the editorial taboos is possible from a novice who knows so few of them as I do, but so far as I have progressed in cataloging them it seems that Grub Street is determined to keep strictly off the preserves of Park Row (and Greenwich Village) by never buying any themes of a controversial nature. Politics, religion, racial strife, Prohibition, the struggle of labor and capital, all of the stock in trade of the partisan editorial writers, is forbidden. Remember that it is a dream world you are writing about, and don't bring friend Joe down to earth by attempting to deal with disturbing problems.

The particular reason why this lesson was so forcefully impressed upon me was an unsold yarn glorifying an A. E. F. doughboy to the disparagement of both labor and capital, with a greedy and discontented working man, rebellious in spite of the financial prosperity he had enjoyed at home while the doughboy was fighting overseas, held up as the most horrid example of the tale. The first of many letters of rejection that this story called forth was one that read:

> This is an excellent circulation killer; it ought to delight all the workers who love to see themselves pictured as bomb throwers and monsters in general. But we are trying not only to hold the circulation we have, but to get more.

And the next editor wrote to even broader effect: "We try to keep off of *all* problems in our stories, but particularly the labor and capital problem."

Thus, after a few more rebuffs, the experimenter's eyes were opened to Lesson No. 7: Trespass not upon Park Row's editorial page preserves—keep off controversial themes.

A corollary to this proposition, I was soon to find, is a warning to beware of satire, worldliness, allegory, "messages", and "serious stuff" in general. For Lesson No. 8 is that the purpose of the popular short story is not to instruct, but to entertain. I make no attempt to justify the philosophy of the sanctum's purchasing agent; but just set this down as a fact. From all I can learn, the editor argues that it is not his business to disseminate new ideas in fiction and to stimulate his readers to ponder them. He simply tries to make those readers happy. No one has stated that sort of literary philosophy better than Robert Louis Stevenson once did in a letter to William Archer:

> Not only do I believe that literature should give joy, but I see a universe, I suppose, eternally different from yours; a solemn, a terrible, but a very joyous and noble universe, where suffering is not at least wantonly inflicted, though it falls with dispassionate partiality, but where it may be and generally is nobly borne; where, above all (this I believe; probably you don't: I think he may, with cancer) *any brave man may make* out a life which shall be happy for himself, and, by so being, beneficent to those about him.

In another passage to the same correspondent Stevenson further declares:

> In my view, one dank dispirited word is harmful, a crime of *lèse-humanité*, a piece of acquired

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evil; every gay, every bright word or picture, like a pleasant air of music, is a piece of pleasure set afloat; the reader catches it, and, if he be healthy, goes on his way rejoicing; and it is the business of art so to send him, as often as possible.

Whether you agree with this view or not, it is patently the working creed of the editors of the popular American magazines; they insist above all else that their short story writers produce entertainment, tales in which the home team nearly always wins—so that Joe may be sent upon his way rejoicing.

Greenwich Village and Park Row picture a grim and horrible sphere, threatening any day to come to a disastrous end. Grub Street replies with rosy pictures of real good people doing real good things in a real good world. To Joe, the philosophic consumer, these apparent contradictions are only opposite sides of the same truth.

Probably Thoreau came nearer to the real facts than either of these rival camps when he bluntly observed: "The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation." But what editor north of Fourteenth Street would care to buy a short story with that for its message? Joe wouldn't want to read stuff like that. And Joe, after all, is the real boss.

AMBASSADORS OF GRIEF

By Carl Sandburg

THERE was a little fliv of a woman loved one man and lost out. And she took up with another and it was a blank again. And she cried to God the whole layout was a fake and a frame-up. And when she took up with Number Three she found the fires burnt out, the love power, gone. And she wrote a letter to God and dropped it in a mail box. The letter said:

O God, ain't there some way you can fix it up so the little flivs of women, ready to throw themselves in front of railroad trains for men they love, can have a chance? I guessed the wrong keys, I battered on the wrong panels, I picked the wrong roads. O God, ain't there no way to guess again and start all over back where I had the keys in my hands, back where the roads all came together and I had my pick?

And the letter went to Washington, D. C., dumped into a dump where all letters go addressed to God—and no house number.

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THE MINNOW

By Dana Burnet

F. BUCHANAN BOGGS was the editor of "Mosely's Magazine". His offices on the forty-fifth floor of a Broadway skyscraper were consciously palatial and gave glimpses at every turn of the most expensive view in the world. He had more stenographers than Solomon had wives. Authors revolved about him as dependent planets revolve about their sun, and where his glance fell was light and fame.

"Mosely's Magazine" was one of the journalistic phenomena of the age. Its literary standing was very high. It made a million dollars a year.

F. Buchanan Boggs had made "Mosely's".

His success was not undeserved. He had reflected profoundly upon the subject of the proletarian taste. He had felt the pulse of America. He had come to the conclusion that what the public wanted was:

1. Love.
2. Business.

Whereupon he had reduced literature to a simple but comprehensive formula. "Give me stories of Love and Business," he had said to his authors, and his authors had written the stories upon their typewriters as fast as ever they could work their forefingers. The result was a triumph for art and Mr. Boggs. The net paid circulation of "Mosely's" reached the astounding figure of five millions a month.

During the course of the Great War, Mr. Boggs, besides ordering his artists to paint the girl on the cover each issue in a different kind of Allied uniform, also enlarged his literary formula to include war stories. But when the armistice was signed and the Germans defeated—chiefly by the advice of "Mosely's", if the truth were known—he had gone back to Love and Business with a confidence amply justified by the results. The circulation of "Mosely's" increased another half million or so.

Even Mr. Boggs began to be impressed. He came into his own presence, so to speak, with a new respect. He was forced finally to the conclusion —as are most great men at one time or another — that he was an instrument of Providence, an instrument for the advancement of humanity, and no small, piping instrument at that. He never had been interested particularly in religions, because religions seemed to fall on a Sunday, and Sunday was his day for playing golf. But now he began to look about for a creed to fit his case. One of his authors heard about it and sent him a book on Reincarnation.

Mr. Boggs read three or four chapters of this book—which was all he ever read of any book—and was convinced absolutely of its truth. He became an adamant and positive convert to the theory of Reincarnation. Rather, Mr. Boggs used this theory as a basis for a religion of his own, a religion that he invented quite out of his own head, one rainy Sunday when the links were impossible. . . .

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His religion was this. He believed that if a man was a success during his lifetime his soul, after death, would be cast into some new form commensurate with his importance upon earth. Mr. Boggs could not imagine what form his soul would be cast into, but he was sure that it would be something large, dignified, isolated, superb. . . .

Not that Mr. Boggs was conceited about his greatness. Personally he was a democrat; rather a commanding sort of democrat, like Mr. Wilson, but still a democrat. He did not shut himself off from contact with men. He lunched every Wednesday at Delmonico's with his authors and their agents—every author has an agent nowadays to look after his business affairs, such as getting invited to luncheon at Delmonico's—and at these times Mr. Boggs, after ordering ten or a dozen stories from an established author, would turn frequently to some humble young writer who had never received more than a hundred dollars for a story in his life and would say to him: "When are we going to see some of *your* work, Mr. ——?" He would then sit talking pleasantly to the humble young writer, while devouring a particular confection called a Chocolate Rum Tart, of which he was very fond. Many a genius was discovered in this way by Mr. Boggs while eating Chocolate Rum Tarts. . . .

There was in the whole of New York only one author whom Mr. Boggs treated with severity, and he was not properly an author, but a poet, who lived somewhere in West Fifteenth Street and pretended to be literary in a melancholy, old-fashioned way. His name was Catullus Beebury, and, being a poet, he had no agent and so had to shift for himself. He used to call occasionally at Mr. Boggs's palatial offices, which never failed to awe and amaze him. He had round, greenish eyes, blond hair, and a large mouth that gave him a cavernous look when he talked.

He wrote nothing but poetry. It was better poetry than the average. Some critics went so far as to say that it was good poetry, but the general public saw little of it, because Catullus Beebury could get published only in magazines that were on the verge of failure.

Mr. Boggs had tried more than once to do something for Catullus Beebury. But the fellow was a fool. He wouldn't give up writing poetry. One day Mr. Boggs spoke plainly to Catullus upon the subject.

"Of course, we are always glad to see your work," said Mr. Boggs; "but we can't pay you much for poetry. Frankly, Mr. Beebury, it hasn't the value for us that fiction has. It's too short to carry over into the advertising columns."

"I have some long poems," replied Catullus Beebury hopefully. "I've one long poem that you could run as a serial, if you wanted to."

"A serial!" exclaimed Mr. Boggs. "Use a poem as a serial! My dear Mr. Beebury, are you mad?"

"I suppose so," said Catullus with a sigh. "But I thought the idea might strike you as rather original."

Mr. Boggs brushed a speck of dust from his sleeve.

"Originality", said he, "is all very well. But it should not be too—well, too *original*, if you know what I mean, Mr. Beebury."

"I know what you mean, Mr. Boggs. You mean that originality must not be original, that individuality must not be individual, that ability must not be able, that—"

"You really must excuse me, Mr.

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Beebury," said Boggs, rising and looking coldly at the poet. "I shall be glad to see you at some future date when I am not so busy. Good day, Mr. Beebury!"

"Good day, Mr. Boggs," replied the poet, and went out, sad and dejected, hugging his sheaf of poems to his breast—really a most pathetic figure.

Twenty-four hours later he was dead. Brief paragraphs appeared in one or two of the New York papers stating that Catullus Beebury, poet, No.— West 15th Street, had died at residence, age 32 years, height five feet 10 inches, coloring blond, weight 125 pounds, visible assets, one trunk of well-worn manuscript. The young ambulance surgeon who was called in by the poet's landlady said that death had been caused by protracted malnutrition.

The following Wednesday F. Buchanan Boggs lunched as usual at Delmonico's. During the course of the meal he discovered a new genius—a young man from the west, who wrote by the touch system and who therefore could turn out twice the work of the old two-fingered authors. Mr. Boggs became so excited over this prodigy that he ate rapidly seven Chocolate Rum Tarts, one after the other, and apparently was none the worse for it.

But at three o'clock that afternoon Mr. Boggs was seized with a fatal illness. Five prominent physicians were summoned and began to issue bulletins. The papers were notified that F. Buchanan Boggs was dying. All sent reporters. A motion picture agency sent a camera man. In the presence of these, and of his authors and their agents, Mr. Boggs called in a stenographer and calmly dictated his last statement.

"I face the end", he said, "with full confidence in the future. I have faith. I believe that whatever modest reward I deserve will await me in the Coming Day and that I will shortly enter upon an incarnation even nobler than the one I am about to conclude.

"It might be seemly if the girl on the cover of 'Mosely's' were to be dressed in mourning for one issue after my decease. But remember not to make a show of sorrow. Friends, authors . . . and others . . . good-by!"

He then passed away. The papers printed columns about his death, his life, his works, his greatness, the amount of his salary, the size of his hat, the number of his stenographers, his fatal addiction to new geniuses and Chocolate Rum Tarts, etc. The five famous physicians who had been called in to consult upon the case signed their names to a final bulletin testifying that F. Buchanan Boggs had died of a podagrous seizure of the heart, brought on by overeating.

In short, he had died of too many Chocolate Rum Tarts.

Death was only a phase.

As one emerging from a profound sleep Mr. Boggs awoke, opened his eyes and looked about him. He was in a new and strange medium, a medium that was neither earth nor air, a curious liquid medium shimmering with a faint light and bounded upon two sides by irregular sloping black walls.

Mr. Boggs opened his mouth and tasted the new medium.

It was water.

"Why", he said, "I had never understood that heaven was made of water. Perhaps I have been sent to a prohibitionist heaven as a punishment for eating so many Rum Tarts."

He began to be troubled. In order

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to investigate further he decided to take a walk about the premises.

At once he made a new and even more startling discovery. He hadn't any legs. He glanced down at the part of his body where his feet and legs ought to have been and discovered in their stead a single feature, shaped somewhat like a fan, that wriggled when he tried to step out. It was then that Mr. Boggs realized he had a tail.

A blush of embarrassment and indignation mounted to his cheek. He extended his hand to feel the new member when to his utter horror he perceived that his hands were—fins!

"A fish?" cried Mr. Boggs. "Oh, impossible! Impossible! The editor of 'Mosely's', with fins and a tail! There must be some mistake."

He looked down at himself again: There was no mistake. He was a fish of one kind or another, no getting away from that. "Perhaps I'm a large fish, a noble fish, a fish of some kingly species," thought Mr. Boggs, who had always been of an optimistic nature. Heartened by this reflection he began to swim through the water in search of someone to corroborate his opinion of himself. It began to occur to him that he was more than likely a whale. . . . .

Then he saw a huge monster, twenty or thirty times as large as he, hiding in a crevice in the bank. This monster, when it observed Mr. Boggs, thrust out a tremendous claw to seize him. Mr. Boggs flicked his tail and was out of reach in a flash. His own agility amazed him. He had never been able to swim so fast as that. . . . .

But the monster! What was it? It looked like . . . . but no, it could not be a crab. Crabs were not *that* size. One ate crabs with tartar sauce at Delmonico's and thought nothing of it.

He rose to the surface of his medium and saw squatting upon the bank another creature, also of gigantic proportions, that looked at him with dull, protruding eyes and a dreadfully glum, dour expression of countenance. It resembled a frog. But frogs were not giants. One ate frog's legs at Delmonico's. . . . .

"Would you mind telling me what kind of fish I am?" inquired Mr. Boggs rather shyly of this colossus.

"Ho, ho!" laughed the other, in a rude, coarse voice. "You a fish? That's a damn croakin' good one! Why, blow my bullrushes, you ain't a fish at all, you ain't. You're nothin' but a minnow, you are. A croakin' little, insignificant little, pesky little minnow!"

"A minnow!" cried Mr. Boggs, and with a sob he sank to the very bottom of the stream.

For a long time he lay hidden under a pebble, weeping bitterly. He could not understand it. He, F. Buchanan Boggs; he, the editor of "Mosely's Magazine"—a minnow! Was this, then, his reward? Was this the form into which his soul had been cast—?

He felt frightfully depressed. He felt horribly disappointed in his religion. More than that, he felt hungry. . . . .

He swam slowly to the surface, wiggling his loathsome tail. A number of other minnows were playing in the shallows, darting about and snapping at gnats that fell upon the water.

"I will *not* eat gnats!" said Mr. Boggs, and thought tragically of the days when he had been a great editor lunching at Delmonico's. Just then a plump gnat alighted directly in front of Mr. Boggs's nose. Impulsively and instinctively Mr. Boggs

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snapped at it. There was a brief tickling in his throat and a pleasant sensation in his stomach. . . . .

He had eaten a gnat.

"Well", said Mr. Boggs recklessly, "as long as one is a minnow, one may as well be a minnow. . . . These gnats aren't so bad. . . . "

He made a good meal of gnats and felt better. He even condescended to play with the other minnows. Eventually he came to know them intimately and learned their several past histories. One had been a prime minister, another a popular portrait painter, a third had been a bank president, a fourth had written musical comedies, a fifth had been a professional humorist, a sixth had made a fortune in oil, a seventh had been a prominent society leader, etc. Altogether they were rather a frivolous lot, but Mr. Boggs got on with them nicely and liked them, though the prime minister, who talked incessantly, was something of a bore. . . .

One day, after listening for a long time to the prime minister's opinions upon Bismarck's European policy, Mr. Boggs grew weary and swam away. The prime minister followed him, still talking about Bismarck's European policy. Mr. Boggs swam faster. The prime minister pursued him. Mr. Boggs redoubled his efforts, fleeing on and on. The bore's voice grew fainter, its plaintive tones died away in the distance. . . . .

When Mr. Boggs stopped finally and looked around he perceived to his dismay that he was lost. He had got into deep water. He was quite alone. There was not another minnow in sight. A foreboding, a morbid sense of disaster seized him.

"Confound that prime minister!" muttered Mr. Boggs nervously. Then he saw that which caused him to shrink with terror.

Out of a clump of water weed rushed an enormous bass, a bass of heroic proportions, a bass worthy of a place in song and (fish) story. It came straight for Mr. Boggs, its round, greenish eyes gleaming expectantly, its mouth opened wide, giving it an air at once cavernous and —yes!—familiar.

Mr. Boggs shot for the surface, but even as he wriggled frantically to escape, the conviction grew upon him that somewhere, somehow he had seen that bass before. . . . .

He hesitated, glanced back over his shoulder. . . . The pause was fatal. The bass overtook him, its huge mouth stretched wide as though to utter an ironic laughter. . . .

Mr. Boggs knew that he was lost. Yet he could not control his curiosity. He turned and looked squarely into the face of the oncoming bass. The next instant he felt himself sucked into those hungry jaws, but just before he lost consciousness, the identity of that face flashed fully upon him. He perished with a shriek of ignominy.

It was the face of Catullus Beebury.

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THE LITERARY SPOTLIGHT

VII: SHERWOOD ANDERSON

With a Caricature by William Gropper

I HAVE never known a man who was worth his salt who was not in some way vain, proud, puffed up, or conceited. There are vanities and vanities and the sagacious mind will not resent the one and be taken in by the other.

Sherwood Anderson has the most gorgeous vanity of any writer I have ever seen. It is gorgeous because on the surface he is the least vain of men. On the surface he displays a charming modesty and a sweet humility, a companionable deference and a willingness to listen.

Many are taken in by this. They speak of him as a delightful and lovable fellow, which he is, indeed, but for reasons beyond this gracious exterior. These same people upon encountering Ben Hecht, say, or Joseph Hergesheimer, are often repelled and disconcerted by the elaborate surface vanity of these men and are soothed and comforted by the much more extensive vanity of Sherwood Anderson.

Hecht and Hergesheimer wear their vanity like a chip on the shoulder, but it is not so deep and significant as Sherwood's vanity which he conceals from all but the most penetrant eye. Hecht cocks his hat on the side of his head, cultivates a repertoire of gestures and facial expressions, and speaks with a swagger that has overtones of insolence. This is because he has not at bottom a self-assurance half so sure as Sherwood's. Hergesheimer dresses for morning, for afternoon, and for evening even when he is alone and he talks at you rather than with you, except when he remembers that Meredith or someone once said that conversation must not be a monologue but a spontaneous exchange of ideas, at which time he tells you that he dislikes people who orate but do not converse, and gives you all of two minutes to get a word in.

These two men pass for vain and conceited while Sherwood escapes. In sheer truth they are amusing and entertaining, and their vanity is a matter of ingenuous surfaces while Sherwood's is a question of his whole being, his very existence. Both Hecht and Hergesheimer are capable of viewing their work in a critical and disinterested light; they are capable of maintaining a certain skepticism as to its ultimate worth. Sherwood is not. He would, however, valiantly deny this contention of mine. When he is brought to speak of his work he does it in a modestly evasive manner, very pleasing for the gullible to see. Hecht would have no hesitancy in *telling* you that he is the greatest writer living; but Sherwood *believes* that *he* is.

I doubt whether Sherwood, when the time comes for him to be embalmed in a uniform collected edition, will alter a line that he has written. He's that much stuck on himself as a writer. Mind you, I think that is an

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excellent and by no means a reprehensible thing. It accounts for the phenomenon that is Sherwood Anderson, a great and original figure in American literature. It is a beautiful vanity, but it is a vanity no less. I would not, for one, have him be otherwise.

To illustrate: Sherwood's "New Testament" which ran in "The Little Review" and some of his poems in "Mid-American Chants" are often unintelligible, incoherent, and disconcerting. He wrote these things down without effort of will, without a plan, simply as they came to him while he sat alone in his room. They are uncorrelated, crotchety mental associations, unraveling under a personal stimulus. The usual artist's point of view would be to regard this material as the makings of poems which should be rounded, traditional, and comprehensible. Not Sherwood. They are, as he regards them, the unhampered, free progeny of a rich, untutored, creative urge. They are Sherwood Anderson and you can take them or leave them, call them art or nonsense; but he will not change them to suit your preconceptions of what art should be and he will not cease to regard them as important and significant. And I think perhaps he is right.

Again, take his paintings. Until that summer he stayed down in Alabama near Mobile Bay he had never painted anything except wagon spokes and barns. And he can't draw a better likeness than I can. But he had the urge to paint—to express himself in form and color, so he sent north for paint and canvas and started feverishly to work. He did not paint what he saw before him: that is, he did not attempt to reproduce what he saw as photographic reality. He painted what was in his mind's eye. He put reds on and smeared greens and dabbed yellows where something inside him told him to place these colors. It was a sort of automatic painting, undirected, unguided by will, except the will to create.

He had the effrontery to exhibit these paintings. Again his superb vanity. The vanity of a man who believes that nothing that he does is shallow, weak, useless, or unimportant because he is absolutely honest and sincere in expressing himself. His paintings met with ridicule, incomprehension, derision; but this did not phase him. He sent them on from Chicago to New York to be exhibited. In New York two of them were sold, fetching a hundred dollars apiece. Sherwood was grateful that there were two who appreciated his work. Maybe they didn't. Maybe they bought them out of curiosity or out of sentimental regard for the handiwork of a man they considered a fine writer of stories. But, whether anyone thought well of the paintings or not, you may be sure Sherwood does not underestimate their value. He rates this value pretty high. So do I. It may be that I am under the spell of him as a writer and as a personality; but I think that these paintings are not only interesting, but strangely, curiously beautiful. And I know there is no insincerity, hokum, or trickery in them.

No, Sherwood is not modest. His vanity peeps out, like those atrocious socks he wears with red and black checks in them, each block of color two inches square. Most people are not likely to notice these socks, because his suit is usually a quiet and comfortable tweed. They are not likely to pay close attention to the violent multi-colored muffler he wears, because his overcoat is a decorous rag-

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Sketched by William Gropper

Sherwood Anderson

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lan. They are not likely to notice the guinea feather in his hat band, because his hat is cleverly chosen to show off his head most effectively and unostentatiously. They are not likely to notice that his hair is trimmed more often than a movie star's, because it looks so unkempt, unwieldy, and romantic. They are not likely to observe that he is fastidious, because he so adroitly conveys the opposite impression.

You see, Sherwood is a Scotchman with the uncanny canniness that is traditional with the race. He is shrewd as well as talented; he has social sense as well as genius. People are charmed by his conversation, because he sets them up a bit. Anyone who gives assurance to another always wins his admiration, sympathy, and championship, especially if the latter is suffering from a sense of inferiority. Sherwood always gives that assurance to everyone. Not, however, because he is particularly interested in everybody, but because he is particularly interested in himself and that presupposes a definite, disinterested, but assumed interest in the petty opinions, worries, and convictions of others.

Sherwood will spend hours listening to doddering and garrulous old men who lie about their early escapades, adventurous enterprises, and deeds of strength, amour, and bravery. I have seen him listen in apparent fascination to a windy old fraud backed up to a building on the busiest street in Chicago. In the Kentucky mountains where he has gone for several years on business connected with the advertising company he occasionally works for, he is the most popular "furriner" who ever went into those parts. This is because he interrogates everyone in a pleasing fashion, draws them all out, displays an interest and a sympathy with them. He listens to isolated men and women, who for years have been shut up in the silence of routine monosyllables, without the stimulus to talk of a sympathetic ear.

He is a sort of lay confessor to all and sundry. A wise and tolerant priest, he violates the confessional only in an unmalicious and disguised way. There is something about him that makes people want to recount their life histories to him. He is the confidant of enterprising business men who tell him their dissatisfaction with life, their secret aspirations, the difficulties they get into over their sweethearts. Hard-ups and frustrated geniuses, neurotics and racehorse touts tell him all about themselves. Give Sherwood twenty minutes in the corner with a married woman and he knows every blessed grievance she has against her husband, from his habit of wearing nightgowns to his silly preferences in women, from his humming idiotic snatches of song in his bath to his shallow lies, petty trickeries, and empty vanities.

What is more, he has a sinister talent for telling you just what is wrong with you, for diagnosing your case with amazing accuracy. He is like a clever mindreader or an Indian fakir. His intuitions are so sure that they act as prompters to your own easy disclosures. He has acquired this talent by a persistent and patient interest in people, by an insatiable curiosity, by an early Christian belief in the profound significance of all human life.

To get back to his vanity. His vanity is such that it presupposes that his own life and work is important, significant, and invaluable. Such is his profound belief in himself that

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this belief precludes his active sympathy with the work of any other writer, especially of anyone working in a different field from his own. Thus he may profess in an amiable fashion that he likes the work of Hecht, of Hergesheimer, of Waldo Frank, of this or that one he meets; but actually he not only dislikes it and can't read it, but is very suspicious of it. He has hurt the feelings of many a fellow writer by telling him, in effect, that in his opinion the inquiring and hopeful writer wasn't honest or sincere. A novelist should know better than to ask another novelist what he thinks of his work: in reply, if the questioned is truthful, he must either admit that he considers the other fellow's work bad or have doubts about the value of his own work. And Sherwood has absolutely no doubts whatever.

He is, indeed, one of the few consistent artists in America, one of the very few men who have had the courage to deny the American god of monetary success and devote themselves to their highest self-realization as artists. Even at the height of his present run of acclamation, he has refused to be lionized. While lesser men would be accepting every tea and dinner, every opportunity to appear before women's clubs and school societies, every chance to give readings in arty eating places, Sherwood sticks to his shack in Palos Park, Illinois, and works. Once a week he goes into Chicago and has lunch at Schlogl's with Harry Hansen, Carl Sandburg, Ben Hecht, Keith Preston, T. K. Hedrick, Llewellyn Jones, Richard Atwater, Gene Markey, and J. P. McEvoy (the true and only claim Chicago has to be the literary centre of America, the only group of people who are vitally interested in literature in the whole sprawly town). That is about the extent of his social activities.

Years before Fannie Hurst and her husband spread the news on the first pages of the newspapers that they lived happily apart though married, Sherwood Anderson and his wife, Tennessee Mitchell, were practising this same theory of independence in marriage. Miss Mitchell, who is a sculptor and a teacher of music and dancing in a Chicago school, earns her own living and maintains her own apartment. Sherwood rents a small shack for twenty dollars a month in Palos Park, cooks most of his own meals, does his own housework, and even some of his laundry. He goes into Chicago occasionally and works long enough with an advertising agency to lay by sufficient money for his meagre needs when he is ready to write again. He has refused to tie himself for any protracted length of time to any industrial endeavor, because money means nothing to him beyond its power to purchase the few necessities of life and give him the leisure in which to write. It is for this reason that the "Dial" award means much more to him than it would to most writers, accustomed to expensive scales of living, self-indulgence, and extravagance. Sherwood knows how to use the money so that it will, in very truth, give him the opportunity to write.

But had he not got the award, had his books never sold beyond a number affording him a pitiable royalty, he would yet have done perhaps precisely what he is doing now. He would continue to create, for he has the soul of an artist, a soul uncorrupted by the exigencies of a material civilization. He began to write late in life, to keep himself, so he says, from

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"going crazy". Writing was a relief from the strain of years of bitter experience and trying hours in the cut-throat, nerve-racking game of commercial competition. He wrote, and he writes now, from an inner necessity, and even did he never get his work between covers he would still continue to write, and still continue to keep his faith in its very high personal (and that is, ultimate) value. Such is the triumph and the apology for Sherwood's inordinate, magnificent vanity.

GREEN FIRE

By Charles Wharton Stork

YOU are April,
Green fire,
A flame that flickers, glitters,
But never glows.

You are a ripple on the sea of Beauty
That clasps and cradles the light
On the bent mirror of its emerald bosom
With an eager gesture of dancing,
Then tosses it lightly away
Like a silver veil.

And you are the upward lilt
Of a delicious voice,
A flutter of lark-sweet laughter
As light as floating thistle-down.

Do I wish, I wonder,
That you should be May,
Should send out a bud of golden passion,
Should rise and break in a billow of foaming ecstasy?
Or would I have your music sound more deep
As from the wounded breast of lyric pain?

I cannot tell,
I cannot see past you now,
Because I must always look at you as you are,
My April,
My flame that flickers, gleams, but never glows.

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LETTERS OF LOUISE IMOGEN GUINEY

To Dora Sigerson (Mrs. Clement K. Shorter) and to Mr. Shorter

Edited by Michael Earls, S. J.

MY DEAR LITTLE OLD DORA:[1]

I owe you long for your best of letters. And now I send you a little batch of them, so that you may see what I am " up to". Your "Banagher Rue" got taken at once by "The Catholic World", the first magazine to which I sent it; and you will infer that I went on a hunt for some correct Gaelic spelling with which to embellish your refrain, and fished it at last from the deep sea, in the person of a funny ancient bar-tender in Boston who is of culture compact. So your ballad is safely returned to Mr. O'Shea, and will, I hope, appear before long, and bring you a ha' penny or two, incidentally. Me dear little lark-lyric did not stay where first I put him, and a suggestion was made that as the word "tragedy" figures with great effect in the lines, it would be well to strike it from the title. Hence my emendation, if it be that, to "Heartbreak", which you see "The Independent" will print. Thirdly, I still have "Unknown Ideal" on my desk: for it came from the "Harper's" last night. But I have another plan for it, and a report shall follow later. The remaining letter was written months ago by Miss Sarah Orne Jewett, one of our best known American writers and a lovely and lovable woman. She noticed your name on the "Roadside Harp" blankleaf,[2] and asked me to lend her your book. I thought it might please you to see what she says; for her praise does not spring thick as weeds, and is truly sincere. She is of Puritan blood, but loves Ireland and Irish things, as her stories show, and once upon a time lived a summer in Kerry among fisher-folk.

News! news! I am going to England again this summer on a brief leave of absence from the august P. O. authorities; but I fear, I fear, I shall not see you unless you will come and play with me in Hyde Park. I shall have with me my friend Alice Brown. Alice writes like a born artist, and is a dear from crown to toe; and I wish from my heart I might let her see Dublin and my Dublin friends. But it cannot be, I know. I have a baddish throat and head most of the winter, and attribute it to Figgers and the Public Eye, two items which I love not in any wise. Hence my journey. The fuss about my office, I regret to say, absurd as it seems, was no myth, and gave me great

1 Dora Sigerson, author of several volumes of poetry, was the daughter of Dr. George Sigerson and Hester Varian Sigerson. "The eternal poet in that wise creature," wrote George Meredith in his introduction to her "Collected Poems"; and Katherine Tynan Hinkson, in the memoir which prefaces "The Sad Years": "She was so full of artistic impulse and achievement of many kinds, and she arrived at so much art without any apprenticeship that the word 'genius' seems not inapplicable to her. The gifts came to her out of air, so to speak; real gifts and nothing acquired." In 1896 she married Clement K. Shorter, the distinguished author, and editor of the London "Sphere". Of the others of the Sigerson *gens:* her father, F. R. U. I. (3 Clare St. Dublin), a scholarly contributor to medical literature, is best known by his masterly "Bards of the Gael and the Gall"; her mother was a contributor to various magazines and published one novel, "A Ruined Race"; and her sister Hester (Mrs. Arthur Donn Piatt) was a writer of verse, and formerly editor of a department in the "Weekly Freeman".

2 Miss Guiney's "Roadside Harp", dedicated to Dora and Hester Sigerson.

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worry. Auburndale is a town populated with retired missionaries, and bigots of small intellectual calibre. We have lived happily here for eight years, in a beautiful leafy neighborhood, but we have kept all our affiliations with Boston unbroken, and were scarcely known by sight except by one family of old friends and neighbors, when I was proposed for Postmaster by an old friend of my father's, "one having authority", who knew something of the way our small finances were disappearing, a year or so ago. Well, I had some rather rough sailing, thanks purely to my being a Catholic; i. e. one likely at any moment to give over the government mail and the safe-keys to the Pope! And the salary ran down in consequence, and I was so like a fish swimming the wind, with the stress and novelty and difficulty of a business life, and the utter impossibility of getting the mood or the time for the one thing I had been doing all my life, that it was queer exceedingly. I am somewhat broken in, now, and somewhat broken up, too, and ready to forget for a couple of months that I was ever out of Arcady, or am ever likely to leave it again. Please don't say anything of the matter; it is incidental and must pass. But I wanted to answer your question. My mother is very well, and I wish she were going with me. Her affectionate remembrances always to all your family. My *poste restante* address is to be Brown, Shipley & Co., Lothbury, London E. C. Alice and I will not reach London before the middle of July, as we are to rusticate and gather notes afoot, first. Mrs. Moulton hies to the "season", as usual, whilst we choose the woods.

Tell my Doctor that I see his honoured name in Lionel Johnson's new book of poetry—for it is poetry, and nothing less, isn't it? What does Goldilocks do at her journalism? Tell her I am jealous that she doesn't send me Apollo's wares to vend. Commend me, after your mother and father, and the aforesaid philosopher, and your brother (if he remembers me) and the good *dog* Bran, to all the Lyster gens,[3] and not least to Fr. Russell.[4] May I have a line from you bye and bye? Did you get a gold pen, and did Mistress Hester get its twin, posted to you one Christmas? Now that I am wiser, I know that gold in the mails is contrary to our silly old tariff law, and must suspect Davy Jones hath eaten it.

Ever and altogether yours,

LOUISE I. GUINEY.

Auburndale, Mass.
April 24th, 1895.

DEAREST DORA:

I sent you the other day a little leaflet, beautifully printed, and one for Mr. Shorter. *He* can't fail to like it, as it is a private issue. I posted them in a hurry, and put a word in their mouths, which is: A Happy, Happy New Year! Today I slip in some bulletins regarding Our Poetical Works. "The Chap-Book" must have swallowed "Dermod O'Byrne", as I have heard nothing from them yet; "In my Neighbor's Garden" is lodged you see, in "The Independent"; and when dear old Mr. Alden broke my heart by having no room for "Majorie", I hurried her off to "The Century", where she still awaits her fate. So be of good cheer! Things are whirling over here: so much to do, so many concerns (not literary,

3 Thomas W. Lyster, the courteous and scholarly director of the National Library of Ireland.

4 Fr. Matthew Russell, S. J., editor for forty years of "The Irish Monthly", the stepping stone to Parnassus for many poets. Miss Guiney had many soubriquets for Fr. Russell, among them, *Pontifex Poetarum*.

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alas! for I will never approach those in so profane a mood), that if I had nine sisters, I could provide them all with chores for life! Alice is working hard, too, though she is lucky enough to find time to sleep by day when she takes the notion; and one who can do that can never be unblest. In fact, I have had no play-hours at all since I left Abergavenny, via Holland, resigned. My fortunes often get into phenomenal ebb-tides; but they never played me so hard a trick as when they forbade me the Low Countree, with the likes o' you winging alongside. What makes you think, most fastidious child, that I don't like your fiancé? I have no point of view but yours, or what I conceive to be yours. I could *not* conceive, at first that you cared a penny for him: therefore I growled at your promise to him: since then, I am perfectly convinced you do care for him, and I withdraw my inestimable opposition. Of course, I would rather see you "totty" (thank Francis Thompson for the delicious comic word!) with personal affection for some one before you went to the length of marrying him; and "totty", Dora *adorée*, you are not. In fact Mr. Shorter has astonishing meekness and patience with you. O baggage! He is good enough to you to earn your regard, at any rate. I won't dare think of any more pros and cons, but bless you, and with anxious eye follow your doings.

Did I tell you I was editing Mangan? His best things only, prefaced by my own long study, once in "The Atlantic Monthly", and since re-written. I shall just "lay myself out" on that book. It will be very fine, in the publisher's sense,—and it will be as fine otherwise as the length of my intelligence allows. I will send a copy to 3 Clare St., of course, in the spring, when it will appear. Please tell your father I want badly to dedicate it to Sir Charles Gavan Duffy. I wonder if I might do so, without asking? For a little surprise? I have a great reverence for him and all he stands for, surviving. And he was so kind always to Mangan himself. If you will, you can help me tremendously on one point. At No. 90 Mid-The Abbey St., they publish (or sell) McCall's "Life of Mangan", a meagre pamphlet, of no great value. But on the cover thereof of such copies as I have seen is a profile portrait of the poet. Now what I want to know is from what original that was taken, where that original is, and whether reproductions from it may be had? Lamson & Wolfe do not wish the Burton (posthumous) drawing for frontpiece, if we can only find another. I have sad doubts; but I would be overjoyed to know that there really is an accessible life-portrait. And I shall never be able to thank you enough, if you can find that out for me. How is Mr. O'Leary? Wish him a good 1896, with health and heart-ease in it, for me; and one to your mother, and one to Goldilocks. The flag I mean for you, you are such an adopted Yankee. Goodnight, and love from

Faithfully yours,
LOUISE I. GUINEY.

Auburndale, Massachusetts, U. S. A.
December 28, 1895.

DEAREST DORA:

I am sending you a "Chap-Book", (not a very good number, save for some nice verse perpetrated by a friend of mine) and in the same package are three books for Mr. Shorter. I did not mean to let him get ahead of me, when he made a note,

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all too generously, of 'me Works', and I will be only too happy if he will accept these. I know he will approve of the grey one: for it was privately printed. We came to port in broad sunshine, after a most auspicious voyage: and there on the pier, mounted on a barrel, was young Mr. Day, Miss Brown's publisher, quiet as a statue, with the big gold-and-green poster of her book, "Meadow-Grass", pinned on his breast. And all the other circumstances of our return were as jolly as that one. Did you have a high time in the Low Countree? You'll never know how much I missed that, and your company. Your father, along with his other gifts and graces too numerous to mention, is the very Tetrarch of Teasing. Give him my love, and tell him that I am going to print my little Mangan study this spring, with some three dozen of Mangan's very best verses; and that I shall, of course, send him a copy!

Alice is mortally smitten with you, and borrowed your poems from me last week, to feed remembrance. I shall be fortunate if I recover them. We see little of each other these days. My mother was not well all summer, but recuperated the moment I got home: which is metaphysical. Do write me now and then. Did you know that a certain delightful long letter of yours arrived after I had sailed for England, and lay a half-year on my desk? It kept well, however, being of such excellent vintage. With affectionate regard to your mother from us both, and to Hester, I am

Yours as ever,

LOUISE I. GUINEY.

October 24th, 1895.

Auburndale, Massachusetts, U. S. A.

DEAREST DORA:

This came to me today for you, $10.00 of our money, for "The Fairy Changeling". I sent "The Chap-Book" containing it, and hope you have it. More power to your delightful Muse! Won't you send me some more things? It makes me as vain as a peacock. Please tell Mr. Shorter that Henry Vaughan is getting on his legs in good earnest, as may be seen presently, I hope, by "The Athenæum" and "The Spectator". Dr. Grosart (who is living in Dublin now) and Mr. John Dennis have been writing me about him; and I have struck up a fine friendship already with a Miss Morgan of Brecon, who is, I feel convinced, the greatest Vaughan expert and enthusiast in the world. See what nice collateral pleasures spring from genuine affection for early English "deaders". Don't you feel disposed to turn antiquary? Then you would never have time to remember the world we live in, which doesn't seem to have pleased *you* always, Sappho!

Some day, would you mind copying for me, in the Library (after saluting Mr. Lyster, and telling him I love him true) Joseph Brenan's verses on Charlotte Corday, to be found in Hercules Ellis's "Romances and Ballads of Ireland"? Alas, I can find no copy in Boston, the Boston of all Books. I would like to use them in a note, in the Mangan I am feebly editing.

Love to you and to the household of my friends. Write when you will, and create the stanza, and give him to me to hold at the front. Alice asks to be remembered to you; so does my mother, who hopes the winter is kind to your mother.

L. I. G.

January 20th, 1896.

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DEAR DORA:

I am a cussed critter, I know. But this is my last assault and battery. Can'st get me a certain "supplement to 'The Nation'" edited and set forth "long since" by one Maurice Leyne? I find mention of it in M'Call's "Sketch". Perhaps the publisherman O'Donoghue, through whose kindness under yours, I have bought Crowley's "Irish Poets and Novelists" (which has a so-so portrait of Mangan, but nothing new to me regarding him,) would send me a copy of this Supplement, and, on your recommendation, expect his pay, too! I want it ORFUL. If you know of anybody who owns a copy, in case it can't be found in shops, from him, her, or it, fain would I borrow. Also I wish that one "Eirionnach",[5] who knows everything, and is suspected of great benevolence, would give me an idea of what he thinks, on severe reflection, ought to be in that Mangan book, and isn't; I wish for a shower of his sage advice, in short! The thing goes to the printers next week. I hope it may be good, so far as it goes, but I am not satisfied that it is as good as it might be, despite the labors of Hercu-Louise! I slip in a table of Contents, which may yet be revised, sifted out four times as many things Manganese.

Am I not out-strutting peacocks these days with K. H.'s compliments in "The Sketch"![6] That colleen has a witching pen and could make you believe all's gold that glitters. How is your brother? My love to the dear household. I hope you have the "Century" cheque. And I will say not a word more now, except to commend myself to Mr. Shorter, and to set myself down as your cumbrous and afflicting Old Man of the Sea, and very thankful and admiring and loving friend,

L. I. G.

13th *March*, 1896:
Auburndale, Massachusetts.

YOU BEST OF DORAS:

I return the precious Mangan packet by this post. How good of you to send it! Some things in it were perfectly new to me, and I am joyful at getting one or two fresh little points, and thank you heartily. The book hangs fire, and I begin to think I shall ask to have the publication put off until October, since the spring season is already so far along. (In shops, mind you! I wish,—no, I won't be so untender of your beauty-loving eye!—that you could see this cross New England landscape, with not a green blade of grass as yet, nor a bud on any tree.) What heads us off now is a tangle about copyrights. Haverty, who owned the copyright on Mitchell's edition (1859) brought out a fresh edition, so it seems, two years ago; Lamson, Wolfe & Co., my firm, are hunting him down, and buying him up, and Mr. John Lane will take the book in London, when it will be ready. Meanwhile I fret in no wise

5 Dr. Sigerson.

6 This paragraph from the London "Tablet", Nov. 13, 1920 gives the "Sketch" passage:

"A quarter of a century ago, Katherine Tynan (Hinkson) gave a welcome to her sister maker of prose and poetry from the West: 'Miss Guiney is the finest type of New England woman. They taught us, those sisters of ours across the water, long ago, how to become absolutely free women, while retaining the most exquisite femininity. Those American women take the world without a fear or a misgiving. More chaste than veiled Orientals, they meet the world of men with innocent and fearless eyes, and find in their fearlessness their armor. They are up and down the highways of the world with any sunburnt gypsy. That freedom of the road is in Miss Guiney's work, and blent delightfully with it is the student air of knowledge and contemplation. She carries her learning delicately; she wears her knowledge lightly as a flower!'"

And twenty-five years afterward, Katherine Tynan writes of Dora Sigerson: "Her face had some curious suggestion of the Greek Hermes. . . . She was singularly beautiful, with some strange hint of storm in her young beauty. . . . She was full of *joie de vivre*, despite the hint of tragedy in her beauty."

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at the delay. The more time and opportunity the better, for I am bound to have it a good book. Since I sent you the list of contents, I have removed two poems and added eleven others. And please tell *votre respectable père*, he who knows, that I have been driven crazy by a newspaper sent me from Dublin by Dr. Grosart, containing some admirable remarks made before the Irish Literary Society (wish I belong to it, so I do!) by the *respectable père* and my very dear friend aforesaid. Now, by all that's merciful and indulgent, may I not have a copy of "The Green and Serene Hills" of Erin? That is, in case Dr. Sigerson be willing to have it printed at all? The other translation, "The Fair Hills of Eire, O!", has always been a sort of jealous trouble to me, for it is so indisputably inferior to Sir Samuel Ferguson's. Indeed, it seems to me that wherever Mangan and he have met as rival translators of any one old Gaelic poem, the Other Fellow has always won. The result in *his* case is pure literature; and Mangan's result is most often an interesting thing, which makes you desire knowledge of the original, and which does not, as a perfect song in English, stand on its own ground. But if "The Green and Serene" may rank beside "Dark Rosaleen" then there is comfort indeed. I ache to read it. Consider me supplicating at the office door and vowing to your father that I am his everywhere and ever, except last summer, in Holland! Q. E. D.

It is almost a year since A. B. and I sailed away, used up and wearied out, and had so royal a gypsying in the climate I love best on this earth. I hardly ever see her, being engrossed in profane affairs, and never getting a whole afternoon to play in, month in, month out, any more, but of course we keep in touch, as old friends must; and she told me she had written you, and (I think) sent her book of verses. I call it my book and feel very vain of it. The dedication was to me an artful and complete surprise. She loves you unto desperation. (Tell Mr. Shorter I do my best to discourage a hopeless passion in me own 'eart!) We are watching, over here, for the issue of his Brontë book. I slip in a flag of the free, whose heavily brocaded folds you may shake out, with assistance, and drape over your mantel, among Piatts.[7] I have a great 14 x 10 flag, which gets hoisted on one tiny tower here at home, on national holidays. The other day, when our Governor died, I put it myself at half-staff. In the night, came a terrific wind, which caught the corner of the fold in the iron paling, where it froze in the rain, and got quite dry and solid; and presently the house began actually to rock (it is of wood, you know), under that great improvised sail, and plunged about like a ship at sea, and creaked and groaned unconscionably, until we woke up, one by one, thinking the continent was entertaining herself with an earthquake! My mother said the moral was that I should have hauled it down at sunset, *secundum ordinem;* and so it was. I lost my flag, or all but the tatters of it, from having no time to devote to the etiquette of the occasion; so I had to lower it altogether before the Governor's burial, and disedify the neighbors. I grind away at the P. O., not at all heartbroken at the prospect of giving it up when my term is out, in 1898. If honest industry can but scrape together the potent pence, I shall emi-

7 Hester Sigerson married the late Arthur Donn Piatt, U. S. Consul in Dublin.

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grate then to London, and sit forever and ever, idle and cross-legged, on the benches of St. Paul's.

You know perfectly that I hunger for news of you. Do I forget that this is April? Upon this hint, O speak! Bring me again to Hester's mind, and to Mr. O'Leary's and to Father Russell's, to whom I find I owe a pleasant gift of late: a book of verses by Mr. Wright. Mother, who continues remarkably well, sends much love to Mrs. Sigerson, and so do I. My puppy Lillo, eleven months old, and "big as a nowse", as an ancient kennelman at Hammersmith once described his young St. Bernard to me, is asleep under my chair (or one leg of him is there accommodated, to be accurate), and even in his dreams, is habitually partial to girls, and wishes, I doubt not, that you might come to America for a romp. Well, save you, and all good to you. Send me some more verses to angle with, when you choose. I looked for "Majorie" in the April "Century", and, alas, found a flat production of my own instead.

Yours ever affectionately,

LOUISE I. GUINEY.

15th *April*, 1896:
Auburndale, Massachusetts.

FAIREST COLLEEN:

I see that our letters crossed, and I trust you will have received safely the packet of Emeralds, much, much appreciated. Your drawings are excruciatingly good, particularly the fat Kerry Piggies. Did you meet "the little cow of Kerry" who is, unless I misquote the poet K. T., "much to my mind"? I am glad you had Kerry for a plum at Easter; for I have always had a sort of longing after it myself. What stole my heart first, I think, is the little crazy coast-line on the map—so wicked and wild and sinister. Those headlands must have pirate gold in the caves under; and I know the ribs of the Armada are rotting away there under the black tides. And the people! It gives me a shiver even to have you say you heard the *caoiné*. I warrant you heard no songs from the fisher-boats, not even

"wherry aroon, my land and store";

wherein, as usual on that ground (to make a bull) Ferguson gets ahead of our Mangan.

Proofs, indeed! Not I. We are stuck, stuck fast, up to date. Mr. John Lane is here, and I saw him yesterday. He talks of giving up Mr. Gill's Mangan, because he likes mine, (perhaps because mine is at least half-alive, and Mr. Gill's but a thought germ!) So you see, until this copyright difficulty clears, I am exceedingly open to suggestions. Thank you; this unabashed beggar simply aches to see the sketch in "The Irish Academy", which is "almost as good" as Maurice Leyne's. And haven't I begged "Green and Serene Hills", nothing less, from my Doctor?

I am sending a couple of books (not mine) to Mr. Shorter with a note. I slip in for you a skit from a clever young artist which you, in Dublin will think funny, because you are likely to agree on that score with us in Boston. I know only one Englishman who can stand such fooleries, and relish them. It isn't Mr. Shorter! Love to all that house, and to you from A. B., my mother and

HER [*The writer here roughly sketched a winged cherubim head.*] SELF

23rd *April*, 1896.
Boston, Mass.

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JOHAN BOJER

(This article accompanies the second of a series of portrait studies of famous living European authors by Ivan Opffer, the American artist, now abroad.)

JOHAN BOJER was born at Oerkedalscœren, on the northwest coast of Norway, March 6, 1872, and wears a Vandyke beard. Others in that fjord hamlet wear them straggly. Whence, then, Bojer's prim trim? He is at home in all European capitals and especially in Paris where he has the largest following of any Scandinavian writer including Ibsen, Björnson, and Strindberg. He has also been in this country and is coming again. An orphan, he was reared in a peasant family, and though made to work like a Trojan yeoman, he found time to attend school on the side and was early afflicted with the itch for scribbling. His "Mother" secured for him a stipend upon the receipt of which he began to study in earnest and on whole time. But his idea of studying was to go from country to country and watch the natives. He knows France like a book, Holland like a comfortable old shoe, Italy and Germany like two cronies in an inseparable trio; and his eyes are on this country. He is after it.

For us, his works fall into two classes: those of which we have never heard, and those we are reading. On the former shelf belong "The Great Procession" (1896), a social novel in which he showed how politics are the curse of the age; "War Eternal" (1899), his next novel, in which he continued to pound away on the same theme; "Lea" (1900), his third novel in which he lampooned liberty acrobats and patriots by virtue of their lungs. He has also written various dramas including "Theodora" (1902) and "Brutus" (1904), and a longish list of short stories the naked titles of which would enlighten or interest no one, superb reading though they may be. He has written no poems. One of his most successful dramas thus far is "The Power of a Lie", based on the novel of like title (1903). As to this country and the works of Bojer with which it is familiar, it was by the merest chance one of his novels made its way across the Atlantic dressed in English. It took. Then came another and another, now ten in all, and they have all taken. Among them are: "The Face of the World", recently prepared for the screen, "The Great Hunger", a matchless sermon and yet not preachy, "Treacherous Ground", which closes with one of the most dramatic incidents known to literature, "Life" with its Arthur Symons theme of absentee love—but all these Bojer books can be had at any dealer's. Three months ago we received his "God and Woman" with its subsidiary hero taken from Wisconsin. He is not a credit to us, though he is to his creator. A month ago Bojer released his "Last Viking", a novel which has captured his countrymen without a man left to be ignorant of the tale.

Bojer lives with his wife and children at Hvalstad, but a letter addressed to "Norway" will reach him.

ALLEN WILSON PORTERFIELD

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Johan Bojer

Drawn from life for THE BOOKMAN *by Ivan Opffer*

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WHAT'S WHAT AMONG THE SPRING BOOKS

BACK in the fall, when my desk was a rat's nest of publishers' catalogs, advance sheets of books about to be printed, and enthusiastic letters from publicity men hailing such and such a volume as "the great American novel", I found myself in a quandary. The lists honestly did not look particularly interesting. Of course it is hard to tell from cold type announcements how the real pulse of a book may beat; but, with respect to the fall lists, my guess was reasonably correct. The outstanding books of the winter in any field have been few indeed. This spring it is different. The publishers, unhampered by strikes and with a somewhat decreased manufacturing cost, seem to have gained new zest. This is, of course, largely due to the fact that the public is displaying a tendency to apportion more of its budget to books. One peculiarity, however, is noticeable in these lists. It seems to me that there is not so much experimentation as there was last year and the year before. In other words, though we have not completely forgotten that the war taught us to consume more solid reading, we are swinging back nearer our prewar basis. This is regrettable. There are one or two publishers whose lists are magnificent examples of a determination to maintain standards. You are at liberty to speculate as to the ones I mean. If you would really like to understand the psychology of publishing in America, secure, sometime, for yourself, the catalogs of our major publishing houses. It will not take you long to decide concerning their places on Olympus, and yet how sadly some of them delude themselves!

There is a line in Paul Géraldy's play, "The Nest", produced in New York City this season, which shows how well that French poet understands the psychology of the reading public. Two women, one forgotten by her sweetheart, the other by her son, are in the last act surveying the broken remnants of their lives. "How can you read?" the mother asks of her friend, surprised. "Oh, not novels. *Memoirs!*" the friend replies, and the mother with pathetic eagerness says, "*I* should like to read memoirs. Will you lend me some?" Biography of one sort and another is prominent this spring. There is Mrs. Sheridan's much twitted "My American Diary", Georgette Le Blanc's "The Heart of My Life", and "Recollections and Reflections" by A Woman of No Importance. More directly within the ancient canons of taste, perhaps, are Chauncey M. Depew's "My Memories of Eighty Years", E. H. Harriman's biography, "The Leisure of an Egyptian Official" by Lord Cecil, or Ludwig Lewisohn's "Up Stream". There is more Gauguin, too: "The Letters of Paul Gauguin" translated by Ruth Pielkovo.

Literary figures, however, are peculiarly prominent. Ernest A. Boyd has translated the much heralded "Opinions of Anatole France" by Paul Gsell. If Chauncey B. Tinker's "Young Boswell" is one-half as delightful as his lecture course at Yale, we should read it at least three times. "Letters to Lithopolis", the O. Henry-Mabel Wagnalls correspondence, give

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a new angle on the mood of the master of American short fiction. There are at least two books concerning John Burroughs: his own "My Boyhood", with a conclusion by Julian Burroughs, and "John Burroughs Talks" by Clifton Johnson. For biography we have a tardy life of Donald G. Mitchell (Ik Marvel), Aimée Dostoyevsky's life of her father, and "William De Morgan and His Wife", by A. M. W. Stirling, Mrs. De Morgan's sister. This is a rich store of reading, though perhaps more fitted for an open fire than a brookside or a hammock.

Giants there are among the novelists of spring: H. G. Wells with "The Secret Places of the Heart", an adventure, on his part at least, into psychiatry; Edgar Lee Masters turns fictionist for adults, with "Children of the Market Place"; and W. R. Benét with his "The First Person Singular". There are Sir Harry Johnston, J. D. Beresford, Archibald Marshall, D. H. Lawrence, Arnold Bennett, Booth Tarkington (back to his old tricks of painting exuberant youth); Knut Hamsun for Norway, Romain Rolland for France; Carl Spitteler's (winner of the 1920 Nobel Prize) first English appearance, and "Nêne" by Ernest Pérochon (winner of the Prix Gorcourt); Leonard Merrick, Arthur Stringer, Henry Sydnor Harrison, Christopher Morley in a new vein, Samuel Merwin, Cosmo Hamilton, and Richard Washburn Child for the men; with Selma Lageröf, Margaret Deland, Mary Roberts Rinehart, Gertrude Atherton, Fannie Hurst, Mary Johnston, May Sinclair, Sophie Kerr, E. M. Delafield, Ellen Glasgow, and Elsie Singmaster among the women.

E. Phillips Oppenheim, urbane and as prolific as ever, arrives in America after an absence of eleven years, almost simultaneously with the publication of his "The Great Prince Shan". Two books of a popular nature, which I shall read with especial and personal interest are "The Red Knight" by Francis Brett Young and "Lilia Chenoworth" by Lee Wilson Dodd. Elizabeth Frazer, the "Saturday Evening Post" war correspondent, gives us her first novel in "The Secret Partner". Among somewhat newer writers we'll have Beatrice Kean Seymour's "Intrusion", F. Scott Fitzgerald's "The Beautiful and Damned", Meade Minnigerode's "Oh, Susanna!", Aldous Huxley's first novel, "Crome Yellow", Edward Alden Jewell's "The White Kami", Waldo Frank's "Rahab", and Norman Davey's "Guinea Girl". There are several first novels of promise. Thomas Beer and John Peter Toohey, well known as short story writers, give us novels fringing Broadway: the hero of one a theatrical manager; of the other, a press agent. Edwin Björkman turns to fiction with an extraordinary study of youth's psychology, "The Soul of a Child". Jack R. Crawford, a professor at Yale and a writer on the drama, has chosen the piquant title "I Walked in Arden". John V. A. Weaver attempts a short novel in the American language (college undergraduate variety) called "Margey Wins the Game". T. S. Stribling's "Birthright", a novel of the negro problem, is already attracting attention in "The Century". Its publishers are hoping great things of a first novel "Indelible" by one Elliot H. Paul. Some curiosities there are: "Hoax", an anonymous effort by a young American; tennis stories by the champion Tilden, a hobo novel called "Emmett Lawler", an autobiographical tale by Edmond Rostand's

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son, and "The Forsyte Saga", a one-volume collection of John Galsworthy's stories of the famous Forsyte family.

Essays and travel books are not plenty. W. H. Hudson's "Afoot in England" is republished for the first time here. Like all good English visitors, G. K. Chesterton, obedient to the desires of the publishers or his own will, gives us "Things I Saw in America". (Do you recall that devastating notebook of Mrs. Chesterton's?) There is "Old Morocco and the Forbidden Atlas" on the one hand and "Cannibal-Land" on the other. There is an adventurous account of the Antarctic by Herbert G. Pawling, and one of the polar regions by Knud Rasmussen. For essays, I've chosen simply those that look as though they might interest me; a new volume by Anatole France, "Novissima Verba" by the veteran Frederic Harrison, Richardson Wright's "Truly Rural", Alexander Black's "The Latest Thing", John Dos Passos in a new and colorful mood, "Rosinante to the Road Again", Gilbert Murray's "Tradition and Progress", and two books of parodies, the collected J. C. Squire and the promising "Heavens!" by the accomplished Untermeyer.

To borrow Mr. Braithwaite's descriptive if somewhat inane phrase, "The Lutanists of Spring" seem to be playing with but few stops. Mr. Braithwaite himself will immortalize Massachusetts poets in anthology form. Richard Le Gallienne gives us "The Le Gallienne Book of English Verse" and Padraic Colum "The Anthology of Irish Verse". There are new volumes from Walter de la Mare, John Drinkwater, and Alfred Noyes. The most important American contribution is obviously Carl Sandburg's "Slabs of the Sunburnt West". Robert Nathan, whose "Autumn" was the best piece of writing from the pen of the younger generation last fall, turns to poetry with "Youth Grows Old". Just what a poem from Gene Stratton-Porter will be, it is hard to say. She calls it "The Fire Bird". There is a collection from Glenn Ward Dresbach and one from Amory Hare. Don Marquis gives us two: "Poems and Portraits" and "Sonnets to a Red-Haired Lady and Famous Love Affairs". The Yale Series of Younger Poets presents two new names on its list: a volume from the editor of the American "Voices", Harold Vinal, and "Dreams and a Sword" by Medora Addison. There are two books on poetry, one by Robert Graves "On English Poetry", another by the Americanized Theodore Maynard on "Our Best Poets: English and American". We hope that his opinions are more inclusive than those of J. C. Squire.

The drama shelf, too, is slim. Kenneth Macgowan's book has already been on the stalls some time and has sold well. There will be critical works by Ludwig Lewisohn, Granville Barker, and Mr. Nathan. Owen Davis's "The Detour" will appear in print, Dunsany's "If", and a new sheaf of plays by Lady Gregory, also "Jeremiah", a play by Stefan Zweig whose "Romain Rolland" was notable last fall.

To glance over a list of general books always gives me a bad half hour. It is such a worrisome thing, this realization that so many lines of thought and information must remain unexplored for so many of us. For example, I should like to read, probably need to read, Margaret Emerson Bailey's "The Value of Good Manners". It is almost a duty to digest "A Revision of the Treaty", the new Keynes book, Frank A. Vanderlip on

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"What Next in Europe?", and Walter Lippmann on "Public Opinion". Into this field, too, come H. G. Wells and Ida Tarbell, with books on the Washington Conference. I should like to read E. E. Cummings's "The Enormous Room", which is said to be a better war book than "Three Soldiers". I should like to read Lothrop Stoddard's "The Revolt Against Civilization" and Francis Neilson's "How Diplomats Make War". Margaret Sanger's "The Pivot of Civilization", with a preface by Wells, will doubtless be widely read and bitterly discussed. The new "Gentleman with a Duster" book is to be called "Painted Windows", and those who are interested in ecclesiastical matters will doubtless find spice there. "The New Heavens" is said to be an astronomical book of some importance. J. Arthur Thomson attempts to play scientific Wells in his "The Outline of Science". Other titles that look promising are Joseph McCabe's "The Evolution of Civilization". "Everyday Life in the Old Stone Age", a Maurice Maeterlinck mystical excursion called "The Great Secret", "Plots and Personalities", in which Edwin E. Slosson and June E. Downey attempt to analyze the psychological background of the artist, Francis Hackett's "The Story of the Irish Nation", "The Training of a Secretary" by Arthur L. Church, secretary of the Baldwin Locomotive Works, "The Supreme Court in United States History", "Asia at the Crossroads", "Problems in Pan Americanism", "A Glance toward Shakespeare" by John Jay Chapman, these and many more.

To children, the spring is not generous. Hilaire Belloc's "Cautionary Tales for Bad Children" sounds fascinating. Thornton W. Burgess is active with "Blacky the Crow". There are two books of children's plays, I notice, "Plays for School and Camp" by the experienced Katharine Lord, and "Red Letter Day Plays" by Margaret Getchell Parsons. Concerning children, I notice "Opportunities of Today for Boys and Girls", and "Meeting Your Child's Problems" by Miriam Finn Scott.

So passes the pageant of new books. Such of them as I have the strength to read, I shall report. If I should chance on some book so deadly that it hurries me to a cold grave, my able assistants will warn you from the volume. Meanwhile, here's to the pleasure that can come only from browsing and discovering for yourself. A good summer's reading to you!

—*J. F.*

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BROADWAY, OUR LITERARY SIGNPOST

By Kenneth Andrews

With Sketches by the Author

DURING the war we heard a good deal about the new spirit of world brotherhood which was to follow hostilities; and at one time there was something said about a League of Nations. It is not good form to speak of this now, of course; it is like telling a man how he made a fool of himself when he was drunk. For now the world has left all that behind—all the world, that is, save the theatre. The theatre has just caught up with the international idea. In this matter it is only about three years behind the times, which is, after all, something of a record. And the theatre reacts to this new idea with a stolid faith that is beautiful to behold.

It is taken for granted, in the light of the new international brotherhood, that what has thrown the Czecho-Slovaks and the Pan-Levantians into raptures will have the same effect in New York. We haven't the figures at hand, so it may confidently be stated that there have been more plays of British and French origin produced in New York this year than plays of native origin. The average groundling's idea of country life in England does not now centre around a hazy image of a mediæval baronial castle. He is as familiar with the 'shires as he is with the Oranges. His idea of Parisian life is not so advanced; but he knows that occasionally a Parisian is found who is not engaged in seducing his neighbor's wife. The theatre really does it. It takes it all seriously. The drama, this year, in New York, is truly international. At the moment you can, by taking a taxi to Times Square, spend an evening in London, Paris, Vienna, Budapest, Petrograd, or Moscow.

The notable thing about this large volume of imports is that, even after going through the adapter's mangle, they are still imports. In, say, half the cases the distinctly foreign texture has survived unmutilated. That is praiseworthy, and surprising. The adapter is inclined to work too hard for his money. Starting off with boisterously defended convictions as to what the domestic market requires, he seizes the play of European make, jams it into his machine, and turns the crank. When the play fails he deplores the lack of mental vigor of his countrymen.

As a matter of fact, more often than not, the adapter is the one at fault. The one quality which can possibly make a play of foreign origin a success is usually a quality too delicate to be tampered with in the slightest. Few plays rely upon their skeleton plot. Some rely upon the evolution of a unique central character who can be done over into American terms, but not many. Ninety-nine plays out of a hundred gain their peculiar effectiveness from some elusive little quality which grows out of an indissoluble blend of tradition, custom, native humor, passing mood which cannot possibly be grafted on

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any culture save the one which produced it. An adapter who tackles his job with an eye to twisting his material into something which he supposes the American public is used to has no business laying his hands on a manuscript. His purpose should be exactly the opposite one. He should assume that the play's appeal will lie in the fact that it is something they are not used to. The play, not its public, must be studied. It is for the adapter to find that nebulous quality which gives it the glow of life; and preserve it at any sacrifice of his producer's artistic convictions. Even if the finished adaptation is totally alien to everything in the native scene, even if there is not a single analogy between its cultural premise and our own manners, its chance for life will be far brighter than if that little spark were squelched. That spark (however incomprehensible its composition) is the thing that made the play live in its native city. It is its source of life. It may or may not be as effective in a foreign environment, but it cannot be dispensed with and it cannot be faked.

The Theatre Guild has given some enlightening demonstrations of what can be achieved by plays of alien extraction that have, in no sense, been Americanized; in which, rather, the distinctly foreign traits have, if anything, been encouraged and made much of. But it remained for a roving band of Russian troubadours (and the roving Morris Gest) to do the truly audacious, the splendidly foolhardy, thing. "Balieff's Chauve-Souris" is the name of the latest experiment to be practised on the always willing New Yorker. The name itself could scarcely be considered illuminating. It became known, as these things become known, that the show, or whatever it was, came from Russia. Yet here it appeared under a French name; and a French name that did not mean anything. For what "Balieff's Bat" might mean must have puzzled even the squint-eyed, weather-bitten curb speculators who watch the electric signs as they are assembled in the

LAURETTE TAYLOR

In "The National Anthem" she reminds us that, among her other gifts, she has great ability as an emotional actress. She makes a tragic figure of the loyal young wife whose life was wrecked and nearly terminated by jazz.

forenoons, and who know everything.

The "Bat" of the title, as everyone knows now, refers to the little restaurant in Moscow where the actors of the town used to gather after working hours and devise stunts to amuse themselves. We may suppose that a few of the Muscovite men about town, the specially privileged camp followers of the theatre who call all the celebrities by their nicknames, began to talk about these exclusive shows to the young ladies they wanted to impress. And eventually the meeker sun dodgers, who pay for their tickets, heard about them, and demanded that they be allowed to spend money to see them. So at last the doors were opened. Balieff became a fad. Later he became a fad in Paris. He tried London, but did not do quite so well. Then under the wing of the intrepid Mr. Gest he came to New York. Here

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NIKITA BALIEFF

He is one of the rarest works of God—a natural funny man. Speaking the most atrocious English ever heard in an American theatre, he is nevertheless able to raymond hitchcock the audience into a festive frame of mind whenever he appears.

he has become a fad—but within a limited circle.

Wise M. Balieff and wise M. Gest made no attempt to edit the entertainment. They did an infinitely cleverer thing: they did not even translate it. They knew that if it was to prevail they must preserve that quite untranslatable *abandon* that is Russian and nothing else. The mad spirit of after-theatre, vodka-warmed revelry was the soul of what they had to offer. It could not be touched. That strangely intoxicating, irresponsible gaiety blazed its way through a bizarre language, through the incomprehensible mannerisms of an alien society, and struck fire. It was indeed remarkable. The spirit of gay madness was all the American audience got; it was all they could have got if they had understood every word that was spoken. While the wild music of "Katinka", for instance, was blaring away, there was no doubt that the charmingly lascivious looking, bewhiskered old peasant was, in his chant, saying things that would have blanched the cheek of a truck driver. His wicked delight was positively demoralizing. He could not possibly have been more obscene if his *chanson* had been translated by Avery Hopwood.

It is very pleasant entertainment; but the audience was annoying. Balieff has been overpraised, to his injury, by his admirers. His show is not one to cause hysterical mirth, yet the spectators were so determined to laugh that the slightest movement of an eyebrow or an ear threw them into transports of falsetto merriment. We were reminded of Mark Twain's remark when he appeared for the first time in a silk hat. The village boys were giving him a hearty, midwestern razz. Mark turned and faced them. "No, boys," he said. "Not that funny. It's not that funny. *Nothing* could be *that* funny."

However, the "Chauve-Souris" is surely an extreme proof that when the elusive quality which gives a play its peculiar individuality cannot be readily analyzed it may much better be left untouched.

ROLAND YOUNG

His Pierre Cottrel in "Madame Pierre" is a subtly wrought, splendidly finished piece of work.. It is the first part in many seasons which he has played with his natural feet.

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The delicacy of the adapter's task is impressed most forcibly on one when he contemplates a really skilful adaptation — such an adaptation as the one made of Brieux's "Les Hannetons" by Arthur Hornblow, Jr. Mr. Hornblow did many things supremely well. He managed to infuse into his English version a pleasantly acrid irony that is Parisian. This he preserved with all the care and reverence with which Pierre himself might have transplanted one of his precious ferns. He recreated Pierre Cottrel with a fidelity no less meticulous. The minor characters he broadened and flattened a bit, but remained within his rights. But when he came to Madame Pierre herself he wavered. What could he do with her? She needed no introduction to her public in Paris. Though she had taken up her abode with Pierre without benefit of clergy, she was still a person in Paris, not merely a type. The Parisian would not adopt the slummer's attitude toward her. In New York she would be, from the beginning, on the defensive.

We think Mr. Hornblow may not have quite realized this. In Paris, in spite of her rather cruelly capricious tempers, her sinuous methods of "holding" Pierre, the true pathos of her was never lost. Child of the night that she was, she still obviously cared for Pierre. According to her lights she was defending what was most precious to her. We missed this in the present adaptation. Indeed when she left at the end of the second act, balked in her little ruse of leaving her dog behind as an excuse to return, it was with something of a start that one realized that she was after all rather a forlorn and moving person. This sudden sympathy did not in the least grow out of the act itself. For most of it we wanted her to be choked and thrown through the window. But this understanding of Charlotte should have been sedulously nurtured. She should not of course be sentimentalized; but the American audience, if possible, should have been made to regard her as the Parisian audience would. Only thus could the values of the story be retained. That is the spark in this play that must not be squelched.

It is a memorable and admirable piece, as it stands, however. Because of our misconception of Charlotte the play seems unsatisfactory and unfinished; but the irony of the man and woman held fast to each other by a million bonds of their own unlawful making — bonds much stronger than those imposed by church or state—is most intelligently and amusingly conveyed.

Another adaptation which was probably even more difficult to accomplish is "The Deluge" made by Frank Allen from Henning Berger's "Syndafloden". This Swedish play has had a great success in Europe, and no doubt it was deserved; but it cannot succeed in this English version, and the poor old public is not to blame for it. Something has been lost in the transplanting, something integral and vital. It has been highly praised in this country, it is true; but, as it stands, it is not a great play. It is, of course, the sort of play one likes in the abstract; it would make good reading; but on the stage it puts an unsupportable burden on the actors.

We have a group of people whose lives are, save in the case of a wayward broker and a soiled dove, entirely unrelated to one another. Thus it is impossible to derive any continuing, cumulative drama from the people

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before us. Each scene must develop its own motive power; there can be little increase of momentum from scene to scene. We feel of course the gradual approach of destruction in the shape of an overflowing river, but it is difficult to keep one's mind fixed on that invisible—and crudely suggested—menace for two hours and a half. Inevitably we get the whole play in the first act. We know that the unlovely human specimens are to be trapped in the saloon, that in the presence of death they are to become redeemed, and that they will revert to type when the danger has passed. We are given all this before the first act curtain falls, then are asked to observe how the author works out his proposition.

The ensuing two acts might conceivably have been vividly ironical, or amusingly sardonic and genuinely absorbing; but in this version, we do not think they are, and we are inclined to be defiant about it. What comment on human nature there is seems obvious and young. The points are bludgeoned home as though they were profound revelations; whereas they were all familiar to most of us after the first semester of Philosophy A. In the original play, no doubt, they were made to seem penetrating by the skill of the dramatist, which would make all the difference; providing, indeed, that nebulous (and perhaps untranslatable) spark of life which would make it glow.

But in this production one feels that the play never quite gets in resonance with its audience. The actors seem to feel it, also. Not being buoyed up by a mounting dramatic theme, they try to dig it out of themselves; and are merely noisy. The nearer death comes the louder they shout. It seemed false. We have the feeling that men are inclined to sulk and brood, not yell, when faced with death.

"The Nest" from the French of Paul Géraldy is a story of quite delicate sentiment told with a fine discretion, an air of impersonal detachment, a lack of emphasis, an entire lack of sentimentality which makes it quite poignant, and actual. This story needed no adaptation; it has what the technicians call universality; it is what happens in most homes in most lands. We strike into the life of the Hamelin family at that point where the father and mother discover with surprise, a little terror, a touch of resentment, that their children have grown up and that they themselves are old and are to be left behind. The lives of the two children have, quite suddenly, they find, untwined themselves from those of their parents. There no longer is a common meeting-ground. Little casual happenings, in their daily routine, prick this fact into their consciousness. They try fumblingly to preserve the old relationships; but in vain. In the end—after the death of her husband—Madame Hamelin, quite naturally, resigns herself to her place outside. It is a play that might easily have been ruined by the slightest overacting, but the discretion of the manuscript is scrupulously observed by the actors; especially deft were the performances by Lucile Watson, Frank Burbeck, and Kenneth MacKenna as mother, father, and son.

At the beginning of the first act of "The National Anthem" by J. Hartley Manners we listen in on a casual conversation on the veranda of a country club. They are talking about where to get it, and how much it costs, and

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the rumor that it is coming down. We listened absorbed. Then suddenly the talk shifted, and we realized that this conversation had been merely an illustration, an object lesson showing what our young people had come to. It was disconcerting; we had been honestly engrossed. From force of habit we had been carefully listening in the vague hope of picking up something useful. That fact really is quite a comment on the play; it is as close to the current mood as that. Also the theme underlying the story is transmuted into terms as objective and ingratiating as that. Mr. Manners believes that jazz is ruining the race; and writes his play to prove it. So incessantly, throughout the evening, the air quivers with jazz from an invisible orchestra. It has a curious effect. After a time that twitchy, unescapable wailing comes to have a sinister force. But the author does not write a very logical brief. Liquor actually does more to unhinge Marian Hale and her dissolute husband, than jazz. Indeed as the play develops it veers away from its premise; and we are back on well trodden ground. What the play really establishes is that a woman should not marry a man to reform him. Even the most casual theatregoer has had that proved to him; but "The National Anthem" does it in a different way, a most adroit and novel way.

"The Law Breaker" by Jules Eckert Goodman is a fairly well concocted crook play, with a gloss of philosophizing which wears thin after the first twelve speeches of the opening scene. Edward Goodman's production of "The Pigeon" is a worthy revival, galvanized into something quite memorable by the acting of Whitford Kane. "Marjolaine" is "Pomander Walk" in a musical setting which, happily, is merely a setting. At times it is very charming and quaint, at other times it is merely very quaint.

THE DRAMA SHELF

"Will Shakespeare" by Clemence Dane (Macmillan). A four-act drama in verse recounting the love story of an ambitious and over-diligent young writer and a girl, named Anne, who loved him. Considering this graceful and fanciful play in connection with "A Bill of Divorcement" one concludes that there must be two Clemence Danes, but there is only one.

"Shakespeare" by Clifford Bax and H. F. Rubenstein (Houghton Mifflin). Curiously enough the two lovers in this play have the same names as those in the one mentioned above. No doubt this is an odd coincidence since the love stories themselves in no way resemble each other. The play had the good fortune to be regarded by many in England as an outrageous irreverence.

"Plays of Old Japan" translated by Leo Duran (Seltzer). Four plays which give in convenient capsule form quite a lucid idea of what classic Japanese drama was like. It was—literally speaking—bloody.

"Plays of Edmond Rostand" translated by Henderson Daingerfield Norman (Macmillan). Two attractive volumes containing admirable translations of Rostand's works. In the preface the translator explains once more what Rostand really meant by that play about the rooster.

"Masterpieces of Modern Spanish Drama" edited and prefaced and documented by Barrett H. Clark (Stewart Kidd). Three of Spain's dramatists are represented. There is a biographical sketch, a bibliography, and a chronological list of plays for each author.

"Esther and Berenice" by John Masefield (Macmillan). Adaptations of two of Racine's plays in verse designed to be practicable for the amateur stage.

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THE LONDONER

C. E. Bechhofer—Mr. Liveright and the Young Angles—The Theatres—Is the Novel an Exhausted Form of Art? A Debate Between Cicely Hamilton and Hugh Walpole—Women's Clubs—James Agate's New Book—First Editions.

LONDON, *February* 1, 1922.

AMERICAN writers have a good friend in England in the person of C. E. Bechhofer, who has been writing in their praise in both "The Times Literary Supplement" and "The New Age". Bechhofer is a young man who first attracted attention to himself by work on the subject of Guild Socialism. He wrote a good deal some years ago in "The New Age", to the columns of which paper he has recently returned to write a regular causerie on literary subjects. He has traveled widely all over the world, and all his travels have been recorded in the shape of articles for the press upon the countries which he has at the time been visiting. He has been in India and, I think, Japan; he is an experienced traveler in Russia, both north and south, and speaks Russian well. His wife, in fact, is a Russian. It is to Bechhofer that we owe one of our translations of that rather remarkable but perhaps overrated work of the Russian Revolution, "The Twelve", and at one time it was announced that he had in preparation a translation of the "Tales" of Saltykov. This latter volume has never appeared, and I suppose the hope of it must be abandoned. Saltykov is, I understand, one of the most difficult of all Russian writers to render in another language, and the "Tales" are described as among the delights of Russian literature.

Having twice visited America (the United States), Bechhofer has in some degree taken upon his shoulders the task, the admirable and valuable task, of interpreting the literature of the United States for the benefit of English readers. It was time somebody did this; for in spite of much good-will English readers are still unaware of much that is occurring in America, and it will make for the better friendship of the two countries if Bechhofer's task is carried successfully to fulfilment. He has written a series of letters to the editor of "The Times Literary Supplement" dealing with the books of Sherwood Anderson (in particular), Willa Cather, James Branch Cabell, and others; and in "The New Age" he has come out with the sweeping statement that on the whole American novels of the day are better than those of the modern English writers. Bechhofer has thus all the enthusiasm of the convert; and if he can do something to dispel the clouds of ignorance which conceal the best American novelists from the really willing but hampered appreciation of English novel readers, even English novelists will forgive him his apparent ignorance of what is being done in this country.

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We have had lately a winter visit from several of the most interesting of New York and Boston publishers, all very much alive to the very writers whom Bechhofer is inclined to disregard in his love for the Americans. It has been most interesting to hear from these publishers that American

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literature is alive and kicking, and American readers still more so. One of our visitors has been Mr. Liveright, of the firm of Boni and Liveright; and he has met a fair number of our younger people. I should like to know how they all struck him. It would be pleasant to know if they gave him any sense that anything was being done here at all. One such young one was saying cheerfully to me the other day that he could not bear to go to the theatre, because he found it so boring. I had been to see "The Truth about Blayds", and mentioned the fact. He said: "It's no good, is it? I can't bear to go to the theatre. I go to the Ballet; but plays bore me to death. Perhaps that's because I'm writing one. Everybody's writing plays now." He then proceeded to mention "everybody". For the first time I became aware that there really is some sort of polite reaction to all the theatrical propaganda that has been carried on for the past few years. I had supposed that all the leagues for the cultivation of the drama meant that the drama was quite dead. I see that it is only sleeping. Whether it will ever wake up is another matter. We have had a lot of "sleepy sickness" in ordinary life for a good many months, and often enough an attack of "sleepy sickness" has ended in the death of the patient. You never can tell, with the theatre. It is certainly no better commercially than it was in the bad period last year. Plays are being brought out, and withdrawn at sight, and other plays are being carried on through some sort of desperation on the part of those who are losing money on them, and not because they are drawing houses that even pay the enormous rents which are being charged for central theatres.

A curious case has arisen recently, over "Paddy the Next Best Thing". This has been a genuine success, and has run for two years. But it is being taken off for the reason that the producer has contracted by a certain date to produce another play at the theatre now occupied by "Paddy". He says that he refuses to pay the exorbitant rents asked for other theatres. The Savoy, at which "Paddy" has been running, is one of the theatres with the lowest of all the highly raised rents, and it is therefore one of the few theatres at which a play can be produced with the prospect of making a weekly profit. At the other theatres, apparently, profit, if any, is made on the turnover, and most of the turnover is taken by the government by means of the entertainment tax. Altogether, I suspect that those of our young writers who have turned their attention to the stage will have to be content with private performances of their work; for unless something drastic is done soon all the theatres will be closed or turned into cinema houses.

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According to Cicely Hamilton, however, who was debating the other day with Hugh Walpole on the theme that the novel is an exhausted form of art, the more difficulties there are put in the way of an art the better is that art likely to be. As a dramatist herself she gloried in the fact that it was harder to write a play than a novel. She spoke of the novel as a thing which had not changed for a decade simply because it was the easiest form of art in the world. The play, on the other hand, was the most difficult by reason of the fact that its form was extremely inelastic and its presentation hampered by the incompe-

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tence of actors, the wickedness of professional producers, and the great difficulty occasioned by the high rents of theatres. Also, I think, by the stupidity of audiences. Her remarks have given rise to a newspaper controversy and I see today that John Galsworthy has come down heavily on the side of the novel. He is quoted as saying: "I am deliberately of the opinion that the writing of a really good novel is more difficult, more important, more enlightening, and more refreshing to human society than the writing of a really good play or poem." I am glad to see this, for Galsworthy has written both novels and plays with conspicuous ability and success, and his word has thus additional weight.

But apart from the relative value of novels and plays and poems which is at least debatable, let us see what Cicely Hamilton's charge amounts to. She says that the play is more difficult to write than the novel, assuming equal ability in the playwright and the novelist. She does not say that it is more difficult to get a play produced than it is to get a novel published, which would be quite true; but that it is more difficult to *write* a play than a novel. Why should it be? Miss Hamilton says, because the form is more restricted. The novelist wants to tell a story or to say something, and he has, she alleges, as much space as he needs to do it in. He can change his scene at will, he can introduce subsidiary characters, he can explain, describe, and analyze —all things forbidden to the dramatist. Miss Hamilton seems to take it for granted that the two arts are fundamentally identical, that the subject matter of the one is very much like the subject matter of the other; and she distinguishes them solely by their relative technical difficulty. This seems to me to be inadmissible, for some men will write plays who cannot write novels, and some will write novels who cannot write plays. It is not the master of the one art who will perform the other art with accomplishment. Otherwise, the dramatist would have every literary field open to him. Taking Miss Hamilton's own test of difficulty, it will be seen that it is capable of being a mere paradox. Where we have always thought that the artist turned to the art which most attracted him, and which he therefore found easiest to him, we need only to say (to meet the suggestion that the difficult art is the healthy one, and that the more difficult we make the thing the more numerous and more sturdy will its practitioners become) that the dramatist is one to whom the task of writing plays presents almost insuperable difficulties. Or, more simply, that Miss Hamilton writes plays because she finds it almost impossible to do so, and that Hugh Walpole writes novels because he could write plays on his head.

That is one thing. Another is this: that all the difficulties mentioned by Cicely Hamilton occur after the play has been written. The knowledge that they are to be faced later may, of course, act as a deterrent, but only to the faint-hearted. But the producer, the stupid actor, and the high theatre rents are all factors which need not affect the writing of the plays when once the dramatist has made up his mind that they are to be written. It is just possible that a play may fall into the hands of a good producer, that the actors and actresses may all be entirely intelligent people, that theatre rents may come down. Moreover, given a decent

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producer and decently intelligent actors, who will deny that the words of the dramatist will be carried to the understanding of the audience in a far better manner than comparable words of a novelist read to herself by somebody who cannot distinguish between tones and inflections—the reader who reads without imagination? When Miss Hamilton speaks of stupid audiences she forgets that all audiences are made up of novel readers.

It is true that the play is a more confined form within which to work than a novel can be made. I should have said that on the whole it was a less rich form. It is cruder and more simple. It approximates more nearly, if comparisons are to be made between forms, to the short story. In the short story there is again a great restriction. Incidents have to be chosen so that they will carry an immediate effect, a climax has speedily to be reached. There is no room for subtle revelations of character, for elaborate analysis, for incidents and happenings with psychological significance but without direct bearing upon the brief and poignant theme of the tale. I speak, of course, of the ideal short story, and not of any short story that I can think of at the moment. I also omit reference to the work of genius, because we all know that to genius all things are theoretically possible, and Shakespeare may have been a suppressed novelist and short story writer for all we know. Assuming that what I have said is true, that the short story more nearly approximates to the play than does the novel, is anybody at this date going to say that the short story is more difficult to write than the novel? Things are not more difficult or less difficult; they are just different. They may be more or less difficult to the individual, but they are not so in themselves. There are themes better suited to one form than another, there is the bent of the artist, his familiarity with one technique or another. What would always make a novel more difficult to write, to most amateurs, than any other kind of prose production, is the length. This makes the novel exhausting, since it is difficult to maintain enthusiasm and emotional interest for such a length of time as is necessary for the writing of even a bad novel.

Hugh Walpole responded to Cicely Hamilton, who had introduced a number of provocative, but highly irrelevant, topics into her speech. He spoke at length, and to the point, denying that the novel was an exhausted form of art. He said it was very rich, and that there were in existence many innovators in novel technique. He pounced upon an assertion that the novel showed no sign of progress, and declared that there could be no such thing as progress in art. I was glad he said this, for it is a thing that should be emphasized. Art does not progress; but technique and fashion change. It was good to see this seized and emphasized at a public meeting, for there is a great deal of ordinary bunkum talked about art and its manifestations, so that the majority of people, who feel dizzy as soon as the word art is mentioned, do not know where to look or what to think. They have been taken in by the mumbo jumbo of charlatans, and think they are fools because they do not properly understand any vehement assertion made about art. The truth is that almost any assertion about art may safely be contradicted. We do not understand the terms we use, and I think most people who talk about

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art do so in an unconscious effort to bamboozle themselves rather than their auditors or readers. I must bear this assertion in mind myself.

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The debate between Miss Hamilton and Hugh Walpole took place at the Halcyon Club, which is one of the leading women's clubs in London. Mrs. St. John Ervine has recently been elected to the committee, and has been appointed "entertainments secretary" or something of the kind. The debate was her first effort, and it was singularly successful. The room was packed, and the audience was most appreciative. They laughed freely, and always at the right things. I understand that Mrs. Ervine has a series of lectures and debates in preparation, and these should do much to make the Halcyon Club take its place at the head of women's clubs. As a rule these institutions are not very attractive to men, although I suspect that they are chiefly used as places to which a woman can take a man without his feeling that his position when the bill comes round is invidious. I have been to most of the women's clubs in London, and I have not seen one that I would gladly belong to myself. As a man, I go into one of these places shrinkingly. I wait in silence for several minutes, nobody taking any notice of me—a thing which could never happen in a club for men—and then I am told sharply to run down to a horrid little cupboard to take off my coat. I do this, and glance shiveringly at a roller towel without a roller, which hangs on one of the dozen or so hooks in the cupboard. I return. It has not yet been ascertained whether the woman I have come to see is at the club. Generally, I am inaccurately told that she is not. I am pushed into a wretched little room where women are lolling or talking, to wait for her. I am subsequently given a lunch which most men (I admit not myself, who am of an agreeable and timid nature) would send back to the kitchen if it were served in a men's club. It is badly cooked, badly served, copious, and tasteless. I am then led back to the wretched little room where I have waited and at last find myself back in the cupboard. Nobody notices my swift departure.

I have taken tea, lunch, and dinner at women's clubs. I have not noticed the members, as Mr. Prohack did, drinking liqueurs before dinner, but I can well believe that this is done. To visit a women's club leaves me with the impression that women are very nice creatures and that they have much to recommend them as companions; but that they understand comfort and the running of clubs as little as I understand millinery. The only club I ever belonged to which approached a women's club for discomfort was a mixed club, and one which I suppose to have been run at the time by women. I visited it only once, being taken there by a friend who was not a member. The rest was silence, unless the committee made any comments upon my temperament, which is of course possible.

* * * *

I see that James Agate's new book, principally composed of dramatic criticisms, and entitled "Alarums and Excursions", is attracting a good deal of attention here. It is bound to be a most truculent volume, for I know of no man so full of combative energy as Agate. He belongs to Manchester, where I believe he had experience of the Cotton Exchange; but for some time he has been in London, and he has displaced Cicely Hamilton

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as dramatic critic to "The Saturday Review". There, each week, he watches over the theatre with an enthusiasm for the drama which must constantly be receiving disagreeable shocks. He is a man full of schemes, so that the title of his new book is distinctly appropriate. At one time, I believe, he went so far as to announce that he proposed to open a tobacconist's shop in London; but nothing has come of that plan. He is writing a new novel again on the Balzacian scale of "Responsibility", and whether it can show us any new facts of a remarkable personality remains to be seen. I should imagine that it will do so, for Agate is irrepressible. To be in his company for five minutes—my own experience, even at the first onset, was rather longer and more energetic — is to experience in a high degree the stimulation and exasperation peculiar to contact with a strong and indomitable personality. If I may use that word without any hint of its general acceptation as a term of reproach, I should say that he was typically provincial —provincial, that is, in his vitality. In London we do not bring such energy as that to the consideration of literature. We are peaceable folk. Agate is not peaceable. He carries his full energy, which is astounding, into each topic that arises. He seizes it. Woe betide the man who would lightly dismiss an idol of his. It is not to be done. He will submit to no man, however great that man's prestige may be. He is the bulldog, and the tremendous flow of his spirit and energy seems to be inexhaustible. It is just the flow that we want in the novel. No milk-and-watery novel could come from Agate's pen. It must be made up of all his enormous vehemence, his incessant interest in the conflict, and not the spectacle, of life. A novel by Agate is like a conversation with Agate—it is a battle. Yet those nearest to him are those who most highly believe in his talent and judgment. He will not submit to shams and fine pretense. He sweeps all such things aside, and attacks the reality. It is a splendid gift, and a full-blooded novelist is a man from whom we may expect work of a calibre so different from most of what passes each week from the printing presses, that we should celebrate his advent. So with a critic who is still vigorous enough and fresh enough to attack and to destroy shams of every kind. This is what Agate does in "Alarums and Excursions", and he is engaged here in many a bloody combat with his critics.

* * * *

I have been noticing an advertisement for "first editions", and have been marveling at the subtle principle which works in such matters, to make the first editions of one man absolutely without interest for the dealers, and those of another so significant that they are everywhere sought. Why is this, I wonder? The advertiser to whom I refer wants all first editions of Conrad, Hardy, George Moore, Bennett, Wells, Masefield, de la Mare, Dowson, Beerbohm, George Douglas, Norman Douglas, Flecker, Gissing, James Stephens, James Huneker, Galsworthy, and Le Gallienne. It is a strange list, both for one or two of its inclusions, and for a great many of its omissions. Where is Meredith, for example? Does nobody want his first editions? And Wilde and Whistler, Kipling, Samuel Butler, Shaw, Mark Rutherford, Francis Thompson, Joseph Henry Shorthouse, and W. E. Henley: does nobody care whether there are first editions of these authors available? And in any case,

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what is the charm of a first edition? Its type and paper is often enough inferior to that used in later editions, the man himself never saw the copy one buys, and as likely as not read his proofs so badly that it is disfigured with misprints innumerable. Yet I know this zest for first editions is real. I even see my own first editions advertised at enhanced prices, and wonder what is the cause of that. I also see works by some of our moderns advertised—"First Edition, 15s." —when I know that the same first edition can still be obtained from the publisher, price 5s. There must be some strange fascination in the whole business. As a criticized friend tells me, there must be a whole side of life to which I am blind. I could understand the joy of possessing a book in which the author had written something characteristic, although even here I should select my author; but I simply cannot understand the craze for first editions as such. The authors I have named as being those for whose works a dealer is advertising, are supposedly the ones most in demand at present. If their first editions are small, then presumably the prices rise high; if large, then where are all the purchasers at the increased price? You cannot read a book without cutting it open, and to cut a first edition open is to spoil its value. Well, what good are books except to read? It is a blank puzzle. If I had to sit in a room with hundreds of uncut first editions I should go mad. I should run wildly for the Sevenpennies that are now no more.

I should be glad to have the fascination of the first edition explained to me by any irritated reader.

SIMON PURE

THE POEMS OF THE MONTH

Selected by Elinor Wylie

AMONG the poems in the January magazines I like especially the "Sonnet to My Wife" by Maxwell Bodenheim. Perhaps each magazine tried to put its best foot foremost in its Christmas number, but to me they seemed to go rather limpingly, so far as poetry was concerned, in January. These sonnets of Mr. Bodenheim are so good that I regret very much the fact that I can only find one of them published during that month, in "The Double-Dealer". If the editor of THE BOOKMAN can find another, I'll take a chance on picking it sight unseen.

"Fire and Glass", by William Rose Benét, is one of the best things he has done recently, though the end isn't quite so good as the beginning. But Mr. Benét's first line is so nice that I suppose he found it hard to beat. I found the page of Anna Wickham's poems in "The New Republic" a little disappointing compared to some of her work, but she is always interesting. "Weapons" is very fine except

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for its concluding stanza, which to me comes as a distinct anticlimax. "The Winds" is more satisfactory as a whole: its quality of courage is so clear, it speaks so calm and definite a defiance.

"Ah Gabriel—" by Winifred Welles contrives to be poetic and colloquial in the same breath. To use the speech of everyday and to put into it singing and magic is no easy thing: Miss Welles is one of the few people who can do it successfully. To me it gives great charm and subtlety to this delightful poem.

AH GABRIEL—

If it should happen now, if a woman named Mary,
Bending to the weeds in her rose and rosemary bed,
Should see a flaming shadow fall, should hear a scary
Whirring in the apple tree above her head,

And rising up should find you, leaning on a lily,
I think she would not speak at all, she would only stare,
Wondering how a grown man could ever be so silly
As to have a golden hat and long curled hair.

And when your voice so singingly said "Mary, Mary,"
"I have come to tell you—" she would never understand
Your mission or your message, but feeling very wary,
Wave you from her garden with imperious hand.

Though, when you left, the sunset would glimmer stronger,
As feathers from your wings floated tinily clear,
She would only think, "Days are still getting longer,"
Or, "My, but the fireflies are thick this year!"

I know she would not know an angel from a fairy,
Or recognize light save in the smoky lamp
She sets to shine for Joseph plodding home to his Mary,
Or believe that golden Gabriel was not a grey tramp.

Winifred Welles
—The Measure

SONNET TO MY WIFE

They say that music is the squandered cry
Of starved emotions on a mountain-side,
And that celestial sweat is on their stride,
Flinging its tortured glint upon their shy
And wild sounds as they rush or creep to high
And liquid death on tops of sensual pride.
This children's rhapsody is like a bride
Who paints a sentimental kiss on sky.

Deride the shallow eloquence of sound
That throws its sighs and cries against the mind,
And listen to the cold voice of my wife.
Her music, cut by thought, makes a profound
Mosaic whose sardonic stones are lined
Into a question poised at noisy life.

Maxwell Bodenheim
—The Double-Dealer

FIRE AND GLASS

The thistly yellow flame flows up like water.
The dusk brick glows.
Fashion the rope-like glass; your lip can blow it
To a vase like a rose,
To a goblet curved like a wave, with a stem like a lily.
Glass can be spun
To frailer lace than the cobwebs brown old spiders
Weave in the sun.
Not pure gold ingots nor all the renown of iron
Nor the blushing brand
Nor crackling cataracts of molten metal
Kissing the sand
So praise this cleanly and bewildered fury
Potent to shape
Emerging contours scintillant as diamond,
Smooth as the grape.
O self-consuming sun, the dew-on-the-gossamer's
Delicate glint!
What symmetries, petaled and pearled and fragile as flowers,
Take form and tint
From the fierce, unslakable thirst and famine of fire
Cold stars control!
Even thus, O Love, through the blood's rebuked rebellion,
Thus my soul.

William Rose Benét
—The Century

THE WINDS

The quality of your rage is my delight;
I saw a wind in a volcanic night
Incline a fir-wood almost to the ground
And with such strength that I could hear no sound;
So is your anger written for my mind
In driven trees and in that mastering wind.

A quality of courage is my gift;
First would you wreck? O builder! Lift
Your hammer against me, and strike your fill.
Cleave me to dust, and from the dust my will
Will rise in spirals, masterful as flame,
Till whirlwinds march in triumphs of your name.

Anna Wickham
—The New Republic

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THE EDITOR RECOMMENDS—

Passionate Autobiography

LUDWIG LEWISOHN'S "Up Stream" (Boni and Liveright) is so able an expression of a viewpoint that it is difficult to discuss it as a book. The life of a German-American Jew and his reactions to America are shown with a zeal that at times almost approaches poetic passion. What the merits of his case are, it is difficult for an Anglo-Saxon to judge. If "Up Stream" were a novel, I'd say that it was one of the most moving stories I'd read in years, its early chapters written with ease, vivacity, and beauty, and its close handled with such tolerant fury that it is at once masterful and pathetic. Lewisohn has a genius for characterization. Here a picture rouses one to anger, there a description strikes a note of pathos that is finely wrought emotionally without betraying sentimentality. The story of Lewisohn's writing career is another matter. His successes and failures make a story that done by a less practised hand might grace the pages of Mr. Siddall's publication. The editorial hero of the romance is Charles Hanson Towne, who was the first to encourage the writer. It is a book with three definite appeals: political, autobiographical, and literary, and my arrangement of the three misplaces the stress. Mr. Lewisohn is first of all a man of letters.

A Wax-Flower Hero

ARTHUR S. HILDEBRAND in an astonishingly mature first novel has discovered a new symbol—for his hero, Amos, the *parlor* becomes a substitute for the *apron string*. Poor Amos. He never achieves independence. He is without doubt the product of his parents' wishes. He is the offspring of middle-class respectability, and in the long run a dutiful son. Here is a study of the American family that is penetrating and crowded with humorous incident. Hildebrand is just far enough away from boyhood to write of it with charm and breadth. "The Parlor Begat Amos" (Harcourt) is a book of which he should be proud. It would be silly to call it a promising book. It is a good book. Hildebrand has done more for parlor education than F. Scott Fitzgerald did for conservatory kissing. Amos Phanor is delightfully human and distressingly ineffectual. He resents his father and mother; but he never has the courage to break away from them.

American vs. English

POSSIBLY there are some persons who still believe that we shall be able to maintain a pure English style in a country into which have been poured millions of foreigners. Certain brave individuals will doubtless stay banded together to fight changes in word and rule. I cannot imagine any writer of creative power who would not welcome an addition of vivid color mood and rhythm to the always somewhat frigid scope of the English language. But whatever your present grammatical creed may be, you will find in the new edition of Mencken's "The American Language" (Knopf) an exhaustive

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study of the development of speech in America, and incidentally, many sidelights on our life and letters. Here is a dry subject made into fascinating reading.

What *is* the American vulgate? Mr. Mencken's "Declaration of Independence in American" is an indication, at least, of the sort of thing he believes it to be. I quote a part:

> All we got to say on this proposition is this: first, you and me is as good as anybody else, and maybe a damn sight better; second, nobody ain't got no right to take away none of our rights; third, every man has got a right to live, to come and go as he pleases, and to have a good time however he likes, so long as he don't interfere with nobody else. That any government that don't give a man these rights ain't worth a damn; also, people ought to choose the kind of government they want themselves, and nobody else ought to have no say in the matter. That whenever any government don't do this, then the people have got a right to can it and put in one that will take care of their interests.

Fooling Between Yellow Covers

MR. HUXLEY showed his unusual powers of invention in his earlier "Limbo", a collection of sketches; but in "Crome Yellow" (Doran) his satirical abilities have developed remarkably. With his punning title and his style, confessedly imitative of Peacock, he sets the note of preciosity; but the human quality of his characters, all of whom are a trifle mad, gives a far wider appeal to his story than you are led to expect. These strange house-party guests so over-conscious of sexoddity (the word seems to me a good one) are so pungently drawn that I suspect them of being caricatures. Denis, the hero, is a strange bird, as mad as a hatter, as ineffectual as a Dodo, and yet with a definite appeal. The women are less real. The high spot in the book seems to me to be the story of two midgets destroyed by their children, who revert to type and by their normality break the hearts of their parents. This is fine satirical writing. "Crome Yellow" is determinedly eccentric and unflaggingly delightful.

A Hobo Snob

"EMMETT LAWLER" (Harcourt), prizefighter, circus man, hobo: here, I thought, will be an autobiographical novel worth reading. It is worth reading; but more as a psychological study of its author, than as a piece of writing. What a pity, if Jim Tully is real as a person, that he cannot write without affectation of the life he knows. This Emmett Lawler of his, man of the people, perhaps; but hopeless snob, intellectual snob; impressed by the bottle-labels of learning, which he uses, together with strange figures of speech, at every turn. I've known many delightful and intelligent hobos; men who, as Mr. Tully might say, "have poetry in their souls". But they did not drag into their ordinary conversation references to Henry James, nor when they described a prizefight, did they talk like this:

> Jaded men stood up and screamed, "God almighty! What a fight! Lordy! Lordy! Lordy!"

Emmett Lawler displays the same lack of humor as do many selfmade men. Having dragged themselves from one ethical standard to another, they become intolerant of the old standard or, worse still, patronize it. Isn't it a pity that such rich material as this hasn't been handled with firmer taste? Some fine narration there is, some of the dialog isn't bad; but if Mr. Tully ever writes another novel—and I hope he will—please someone tell him not to do things like this: "a red page in his book of life", "Slim drank the purple wine of battle", "like worried phantoms of Sleepless Spectres in a City of Perpetual Night".

—*J. F.*

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A SHELF OF RECENT BOOKS

AMERICAN CIVILIZATION

By John Erskine

AN unsympathetic critic might make a strong case against this book by fixing attention on the few vulnerable chapters and by ignoring the many fine ones. The vulnerable chapters are in no sense inquiries into American civilization, but rather they are expressions of what their writers happen to dislike, expressions of private irritations, obsessions and grudges. Almost all the chapters in the book are admirable in style and manner, but some of the vulnerable ones are unpardonably cheap and personal in tone. Even bad temper may at times get you somewhere in literary effect; when the writer who expounds the Irish view of our civilization devotes several pages to an angry dissection and dismemberment of Paul Elmer More's "Shelburne Essays", the literary effect produced on me is amazement that the most aloof and austere of our contemporary critics has made so stinging an impression upon Irish readers. My opinion of Mr. More's carrying power goes up. But unfortunately it is possible to be vulgar without being either entertaining or illuminating. The chapter on "Politics", except for the single idea that we ought to elect our representatives from the country at large, as in England, dedicates itself to the proposition that the average congressman, if not a fool, is a knave. The writer's literary method is as primitive and monotonous as the tactics of Hector and Ajax when they heaved rocks at each other.

> . . . the worst ass in Congress. . . . ., the most shameless scoundrel (page 21) . . . If he (a congressman) has genuine ability, it is a sort of accident. If he is thoroughly honest, it is next door to a miracle (page 22) . . . Examine him at leisure, and you will find that he is incompetent and imbecile, and not only incompetent and imbecile, but also incurably dishonest . . . His standards of honor are those of a country banker—which he also often is (page 23) . . . . That normal congressman, as year chases year, tends to descend to such depths of puerility, to such abysses of petty shysterism, that he becomes offensive alike to the intelligence and to the nose. His outlook, when it is honest, is commonly childish—and it is very seldom honest (page 27).

Since Mr. Stearns and the majority of his associates practise a more subtle technique of criticism, we must suppose that the sort of thing just quoted was aside from their wish and got into the book by bad luck. We can forget it quickly enough in our delight over such fine chapters as "The City" (Lewis Mumford), "The Law" (Zachariah Chafee, Jr.), "Science" (Robert H. Lowrie), "Music" (Deems Taylor), "Art" (Walter Pach), "The Alien" (F. C. Howe), and "Racial Minorities" (G. T. Robinson). These sections alone would make the book remarkable, and there are other contributions only less sound and informing. Some duplication and overlapping might have been avoided; "The Intellectual Life" and "The Literary Life" need not be treated separately in a book, however they may be encountered in American experience; and since, moreover, it appears from these two chapters that neither the intellectual nor the literary life can be discovered in any large volume among us, perhaps some

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space should have been economized to make room for chapters on architecture, on dancing, and on the movies—all of them characteristic symptoms of our civilization.

Yet after all that an unsympathetic or a sympathetic critic might charge against the book, it is beyond question one of the most significant and thought-provoking volumes we have had in recent years. The fact that so many persons had a hand in it makes it interesting at once; this pooling of opinion or prejudices will show us something about ourselves. Indeed, the book is perhaps too serious and too thought-provoking to be as popular as it deserves, for it asks from the reader the same seriousness of purpose which produced it. But sooner or later it will be studied carefully; it has value as a permanent document.

In his preface Mr. Stearns sees the lasting significance of these chapters in certain basic ideas common to them all. He thinks there is in all of them a conviction more or less explicit that theory and practice are tragically divorced in American conduct, so that it is hard, if not impossible, to regulate our behavior by appealing to our professed ideals; a conviction, moreover, that American civilization is not and cannot be exclusively Anglo-Saxon, and that our national development must take account of the heterogeneous elements in the country; a conviction, finally, "that the most moving and pathetic fact in the social life of America today is emotional and æsthetic starvation, of which the mania for petty regulation, the driving, regimentalling, and drilling, the secret society and its grotesque regalia, the firm grasp on the unessentials of material organization of our pleasures and gaieties are all eloquent stigmata."

Personally I share these three convictions, but I do not find them running through these chapters; they are Mr. Stearns's most important contribution to the volume. What does give unity to the book is the definition of civilization which practically all the contributors seem to start from—an old-fashioned definition which stresses the traditional graces of the mind, and which recognizes our main problem in the spread of industrialism over every phase of American life. This Inquiry into American Civilization is essentially a study of the peril of industrialism. It differs in form, but not greatly in sentiment, from "The Education of Henry Adams". Evidently the spiritual life of the nation is not to be swamped without a protest, and here are thirty of our contemporaries saying with vigor that the perennial ideals of culture must be reasserted in the republic and genuinely followed.

Some of the younger writers in the book, strangely enough, say this like old men, without hope and without constructive suggestion. Or if they cherish any hope, it is to run away from industrialism altogether. They tell us, as arguments for decamping, that our small towns are dismal, that our vaunted education does not take us very far, that our poets and artists are not appreciated among us—and all this is true enough. But we knew it before, and alas! we have heard it in other parts of the earth, of other countries than our own. Industrialism is the mode of the modern world, as feudalism was once the mode of Europe, and if the shadow is heavy upon our country, it is darkening also elsewhere, even in France and the South Seas; and what other paradise has the young American heard of?

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Fortunately, there are pages in this book which tell us the way to face industrialism; it cannot be removed or avoided, but it can be controlled and transformed. Civilization must take charge of it, not run away from it. Mr. Mumford strikes the right note in his fine discussion of the American city:

> With the beginning of the second decade of this century there is some evidence of an attempt to make a genuine culture out of industrialism—instead of attempting to escape from industrialism into a culture which, though doubtless genuine enough, has the misfortune to be dead. The schoolhouses of Gary, Indiana, have some of the better qualities of a Gary steel plant. That symptom is all to the good. It points perhaps to a time when the Gary steel plant may have some of the educational virtues of a Gary school.

It is cheering to come on such a mingling of good sense and faith. We have heard enough of making the world safe for democracy; democracy, if we used it, would humanize the world. And since some of the writers in this volume seem convinced that America is an unsafe place for culture, it is helpful to see the horse put once more before the cart—to be reminded that culture must have some faith in itself and must go down boldly into the American arena, if the empire of industrialism is ever to be a humane civilization.

Civilization in the United States, An Inquiry by Thirty Americans. Edited by Harold E. Stearns. Harcourt, Brace and Co.

FROM OUT THE PAST

By Mary K. Ford

THERE is a curious old-fashioned air about Gertrude Atherton's latest book, "Sleeping Fires". This is not warranted by the fact that the scene is laid in San Francisco some fifty years ago, in the days when, according to the author, that city boasted a conservative and aristocratic society composed almost entirely of southerners, to which the north, lately victorious in the Civil War, sought entrance in vain.

Into this milieu Dr. Talbot, a prosperous and popular physician some forty years of age, brings his young Bostonian wife. She is much the superior intellectually of the women to whom he introduces her, as well as of her husband, a man who never reads himself, and who considers women with a taste for that pastime as bluestockings. Into this community also comes a gifted, clever man named Langdon Masters, to take a position on one of the city newspapers. He and Madeleine Talbot meet, find they have tastes in common, and before they know it are swept into an intimacy that can only result in disaster if it goes any further. Talbot is informed of it and he insists that Masters leave the city. This Masters does, going to New York and giving himself over to dissipation. When Madeleine hears of it she resolves to follow his example and, leaving her husband, tries to drink herself to death. He divorces her and she at once sets out for New York to rescue Masters and devote her life to him. They are married and happiness at last is theirs. Neither of them seems to have had much difficulty in escaping from the power of the demon rum, and the scene where Madeleine invades a dive at the Five Points and drags Masters from the clutches of the woman with whom he has been living, is absurd. The descriptions of the degradation and drunkenness into which Masters had fallen read like an old-fashioned tract, and the picture of a San Francisco society that frowns upon divorce strains our powers of imagination.

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Mrs. Burnett's "The Head of the House of Coombe" is also a trifle old-fashioned albeit a much better piece of work and a much more interesting story. It deals with London before the Great War, and the best drawn character in it is Mrs. Gareth-Lawless, a beautiful but heartless woman. To read of her is to realize the wonderful power personal beauty wields, no matter what the handicap as regards lack of intelligence. The heroine is her daughter, so neglected as a child that until she is six she has never been kissed. Living in dismal upper rooms in a small London house, she knows her mother only as "The Lady Downstairs". Lord Coombe, from whom the book takes its name, is a rather theatrical character, known all over Europe for his good clothes, his fine breeding, and his vices; but it is to him that Robin Gareth-Lawless, all unwittingly, owes her education, the companionship of two women who love her, an escape from her dull existence, and even more than that, for Lord Coombe rescues her from a great and real danger. The book closes in August, 1914, but there is to be a sequel in which we may follow the fortunes of the characters. It will be worth while, for Mrs. Burnett has the ability to tell an interesting story. The character of Robin will meet with scant favor from the admirer of the modern, hard, brilliant, individualistic heroine with whom we are now supplied. The beautiful, sensitive child, with her thwarted, loving instincts and her unappeased hunger for affection, is as different as possible from the young women drawn by recent writers, with their single-minded pursuit of their own interests and their keen eye for the main chance. Some of us may prefer Robin.

Sleeping Fires. By Gertrude Atherton. Frederick A. Stokes Co.
The Head of the House of Coombe. By Frances Hodgson Burnett. Frederick A. Stokes Co.

A REALIST BORROWS MOONBEAMS

By Ruth Hale

THERE comes up from Walter de la Mare's "Memoirs of a Midget" a bewildering but potent emotional spell: something as conquering as a dream. One ventures an attempt to define this quality only because it is so persistent, and because it is so absolutely present that to try to ignore it and speak of the thing's exterior values is to do a coward's part by Mr. de la Mare.

The book is, first, not "exquisite". It is ravaging—but it is done exquisitely. A realist borrows moonbeams in which to twine himself, so that his welcome may be freed from alarms. Mr. de la Mare must have known that what he had to say in the "Memoirs" would be unendurable if said too plainly. The surface of the book is laid over with fine traceries, with an infinitude of small and perfect rhythms. So half the book may be read before one senses that the delicacies are no delicacies, but mere painstaking understatements; that the story is of a long torture, bravely and elegantly borne; and finally, that the Midget is no midget, but simply one of us, made small by the guile of her author so that we cannot possibly escape the meaning of her story.

Probably Mr. de la Mare could not have been sustained through such a magnificent effort of pure craftsman-

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ship as these Memoirs show if so profound a feeling had not underlain them. We may therefore excuse ourselves the better for passing over the method for the moment, to get at the substance.

Such of the life of God as dwells in the body of man, these Memoirs seem to say, has a bitter and terrible journey from the peace before birth to the peace after death. Mortal affiliation is a long crucifixion to the soul. The individual of sensitiveness can find no rest among his fellows, except perhaps transiently, in some well-beloved. Isolation and solitude are his tempting respites.

Every human ego, while it remains safe from outer contacts, is unafraid. There are those so finely devised that almost all their contacts scarify them. There are few who are not hurt a little. It was of these finer ones, to whom the temptations of isolation are so powerful, that Mr. de la Mare wished to write. He did not intend that he should be outwitted by those who might affect to disbelieve in mere sensitiveness, so he dwindled his little heroine to where the dullest could understand why she preferred the stars.

This frail person he then set upon the world. She was torn from the privacies of her garden, the cherishings of her family. She went to live with strangers, in a house on a hill, and when she escaped from them to the skies and the stars outside, she was pulled into life again by an old woman in London who displayed her as a toy to a vast procession of friends. Finally, she thrust herself literally into a show booth and sold her eccentricity to the crowds of a country circus.

All of these things she did to buy for herself the wholeness of her soul, and when she found it, she went back to her garden for the little while before her end.

Life will burn you, says this story of the Midget, but there is no honor for the living but to seize it and be burned, and be damned to it. Gallantry is the only course which does not betray and besmirch the living God. Beat upon the barriers, if not until, then as if, they would go down.

This is the faith of Walter de la Mare, shining through its stippled veils. It is tragic, and it is serene. It takes even humiliation by its ugly neck and thrusts it up as its figurehead. But it makes no covenants with those who are not brave.

Memoirs of a Midget. By Walter de la Mare. Alfred A. Knopf.

THINGS OF BEAUTY

By Peggy Baird

THE rampant tidal wave of a field of wild flowers inspires most adults to nothing more than an industrious cultivation of the star of weedy geraniums in the front yard. This shows a lack of perspective in the idea of beauty. It is false to believe that if flowers are beautiful they will retain that quality no matter how or where they are placed; and few realize even now that there is a science of garden growing. If our roses fail to bloom, we blame the rain or the want of it; the poverty or luxury of the soil; or, with greater naïveté, the malignancy of the powers above. We are neither surprised nor disappointed if the results of our efforts resemble nothing so much as an old maid's hat trailing on Sunday to a back-country sermon.

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Fortunately the days of haphazard planting are nearly ended. People who can afford beautiful homes are not spending their whole appropriation on the lady who decorates the front parlor in late Chinese and the back in early Venetian with a touch of baroque thrown in for good measure; they are using some of it for exterior decoration. Although landscape gardening in this country has not arrived at the finished point as in England, France, or Japan, we are nevertheless making great progress. Many books are now being published on the subject and it is an important fact that the majority of these are useful to the amateur as well as to the professional gardener.

Perhaps the most important of the recent works on garden culture is Albert Taylor's "The Complete Garden". It is a thoroughly scientific work, filled with information on everything pertaining to the raising of flowers, shrubs, trees, or vines. Take for instance the instructions for transplanting. One has to be very careful in this work, know the dormant period exactly; for transplanting is a violent act and stops the tree's vital activities. Mr. Taylor has made valuable charts which show the great variance of the dormant period in different localities, with only 57 days in which to plant evergreen trees in northern New York and about 182 in Oregon.

As one can easily see, it is better to have exact knowledge when planting, whether you have a ten acre space to cover or a ten foot square in front of a suburban five-minutes-from-the-station dwelling. One of the chief points of Mr. Taylor's book is his specific exactness, and part of its charm lies in the fifty illustrations showing what garden beauty can be like if one is willing to take the trouble. He has also made charts of pruning seasons which are similar to those for transplanting. Quite evidently these are useful, as nearly all my friends went rapidly through the book to find out when to prune their one rambler rose.

To Mr. Taylor then belongs the honor of having achieved an invaluable book for the gardener who has not every bit of his work at his fingers' ends. He leaves nothing to the imagination, and for this reason his book should be in the hands of all amateur gardeners, whose usual tendency is to depend on the imagination for everything.

The Complete Garden. By Albert D. Taylor. Doubleday, Page and Co.

FOUR ENGLISH NOVELS

By Burton Rascoe

OF the four novels listed below, Mr. Bennett's is the most entertaining, Miss Kaye-Smith's the most distinctive, Mr. Maxwell's the most ordinary, and Mr. McKenna's the most exasperating. All of them are competent, none of them is of the first rank. All of them are good documents, none of them save, perhaps, Miss Kaye-Smith's is a satisfactory union of emotional sympathy and intelligence.

"Mr. Prohack" and "A Little More" are somewhat alike in theme. Both have to do with the sudden acquisition of wealth by impecunious middle-class English families. Mr. Maxwell permits his people to have far more wealth than they need that he may show us how they misuse it, and then deprives them of it that he may show us how much better off they are, spiritually, without it. Mr. Bennett

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showers his hero with gold that he may show us that, in essentials, people's characters do not change.

Mr. Maxwell contrives a parable of the English desire for wealth and for social position. He doesn't care for this sort of thing himself and he has a poignant, though lofty pity for the shallow beings who are not contented with the simple, homely, human virtues. To emphasize his point, he builds his novel in the form of a circle, starting with a smiling, affable, happy family, pinched by poverty and wishing for "a little more". They acquire this "little more" and still a little more until, if they only had a little more Mr. Welby could buy a knighthood. In their rise to power they fall heir to the hauteur that money brings to small-souled folk; they snub their former friends; they are cheap and chinchy in ignominious ways; they are fretful, false, and fatuous. Then the war sweeps away their money and their pretensions. They sink to the direst poverty, still hoping for a propitious turn of the wheel of chance, smiling, affable, courageously happy, though broke.

I found this elaborate modern version of the Midas fable a little boring, for all the neatness of Mr. Maxwell's technique. The characters are carefully (if conventionally) drawn; but I wondered why they were drawn at all. The novel may be useful as a reassurance to some in their indigence and a warning to some who are in the way to acquire wealth; but that it is more than that I am inclined to doubt.

I said a moment ago that in his delightful little story Mr. Bennett seeks, by the way, to show that people's characters do not alter. But he shows very subtly that their opinions vary with the wind. Mr. Prohack is, throughout the story, a wise, good-natured, philosophical romantic. Wealth does not change his heart; but it does very materially change his point of view. As an efficient and underpaid government clerk, keeping up appearances by small inconvenient economies, he is beset with rancor at the rapacity of the war profiteers, burdened with an ineffable sadness at the injustice of life. He is a wistful radical hoping tentatively for a revolution as a prelude to better things. Then he is left a fortune by a very material-minded man who has been clever enough to sell great quantities of necessaries for more than he paid for them. Once he has capital it increases by the natural momentum of interest and turnover in a complex buying-and-selling civilization. An irascible, shrewd-minded old pirate absorbed in the game of finance lets Mr. Prohack in on a deal which nets him millions. Mr. Prohack then sees that what he once regarded as the mendacity of individuals is only an inevitable phase of contemporary civilization. The machine is heartless, cruel, and wasteful; but it exists and those who use it are only the ones who would otherwise be used by it. Mr. Prohack's son, returning from the war, tramps the streets in vain search for useful employment. Getting it not, he plans a cynical revenge on society: he borrows money, buys for less and sells for more. He amasses wealth and spends it wastefully, nonproductively. His heart is hardened by the old men's war, but his head is clear and his mind is alert. . . . . It is a charming story, tinged with authentic and whimsical irony, rapidly told, brightened by suave humor and tightened by good drama. And it is a story of mature sentiment, of a happy marriage, "for better, for

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worse", as the subtitle of the novel indicates.

"Joanna Godden" is Miss Kaye-Smith's finest performance to date, and that is saying quite a good deal, for she is a sincere and conscientious artist, intent upon achieving the highest possibilities in the novel form from restricted materials. This is the story of two sisters, and particularly of one, Joanna, in an isolated Kentish community. It is at once a bitter and a sympathetic story of selfishness and jealousy, of narrow views and moments of ecstasy, of the force of opinion and of the exigencies of the flesh in the face of that opinion. Joanna is a shrewish nemesis of other violators of the code, even after she has suffered from the punishment she inflicts. The story has power and intensity; it reveals pity and understanding.

Mr. McKenna is rather shameless in the third volume of his trilogy, "The Sensationalists". It sounds like the confession of a much perplexed young man, doubtful whether to cling to the old Victorian gods or give himself wholeheartedly to the new. It sounds as if Mr. McKenna were evening off a few old scores and making a new set of fine resolutions, conspicuous among which is, to adopt a lofty contempt for his frivolous contemporaries. This sounds priggish and the book is just that. It is amusing and even, at times, interesting; but it is immature, badly organized. The "secret victory" is a satisfaction which only Mr. McKenna and his hero are aware of. Mr. McKenna should let his readers in on the secret.

Mr. Prohack. By Arnold Bennett. George H. Doran Company.
A Little More. By W. B. Maxwell. Dodd, Mead and Co.
Joanna Godden. By Sheila Kaye-Smith. E. P. Dutton and Co.
The Secret Victory. By Stephen McKenna. George H. Doran Company.

CONCERNING EDITORIALS

By H. S. Rushmore

ONE of the admirable things about Robert Wilson Neal's book, "Editorials and Editorial Writing", is that it avoids leading the reader into and through a labyrinth of controversial territory in revealing the structure, purpose, and use of the various kinds of editorials considered—and if there is a kind not considered it must bear relationship to the fourth dimension.

Mr. Neal ignores the oft used claim that editorial writers are born, not made, and proceeds constructively to unfold the means by which writers of ability can equip themselves for this form of work. He does not pretend, of course, that everyone can write editorials. Everyone cannot. Neither can everyone shovel coal or climb a high ladder. The really important thing about Mr. Neal's book is that it honestly and in a straightforward manner tackles the difficult problem of supplying a need in that field of endeavor—none the less a need because certain cock-sure writers believe and cry from the housetops their conviction that writers of editorials must be born to the job.

It is to the effort to equip the editorial writer with the best tempered, the keenest, and the most serviceable tools available for the profession's use, that Mr. Neal addresses himself. He classifies the various kinds of editorials, then dissects many examples of each class in a manner not before attempted within the knowledge of the writer. He has numerous suggestions valuable alike to the student who will be the editorial writer of tomorrow and to him who sits in the editorial chair today.

Editorials and Editorial Writing. By Robert Wilson Neal. The Home Correspondence School.

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RECENT BOOKS IN BRIEF REVIEW

IN a series of rapid episodes, May Sinclair shows under an amazing illumination the knots and twists in the character of her heroine. The "Life and Death of Harriett Frean" (Macmillan) embodies Miss Sinclair's method at its best. No words are wasted, no incidents but have a vital bearing on the story. Here is a girl with an exaggerated fidelity to parents and friends. Her faithfulness is such that, at times, it serves to defeat its own aims. The girl's life is cruel and hard, and Miss Sinclair has not attempted to gloss over the telling of it with false smiles. There is nothing happy about the little volume. Yet one gets to know Harriett so well in the days of her girlhood, that it becomes impossible to cast her aside before watching the end.

"Modern Russian Poetry" (Harcourt, Brace), translated and compiled by Babette Deutsch and Avrahm Yarmolinsky, is the history of more than a hundred years of the lyric life of Russia. Beginning with Pushkin and the Elizabethan age of Russian literature, the anthology carries us through the classicist age, the symbolist or neo-romantic movement with Balmont as chief priest, to the acmeist epoch (Akmatovha), and ends on a modern imagist note with Marienhof. The critical and biographical estimate of each poet, supplied in a compact, rapid style, by turns flagellant or sympathetic and often amusing, furnishes, in the disparity shown between the imaginative and real lives of these poets, a study for the psychologist and a fund of material for the amateur cynic.

Magdeleine Marx, the author of "Woman", in "You" (Seltzer) again attempts to "disclose the soul of Woman". Perhaps she succeeds; it would be impossible to say either one way or the other, as so great a part of the book is unintelligible. But, from what little we are able to assimilate of the character of Anne Breven, the central figure of the novel, we cannot but conclude that the author is wrong in attempting to arrive at generalizations from the peculiarities of so unique a person. At least, we fervently hope that Anne Breven is unique. We should hate to think that many women indulge in as much neurasthenic introspection as does she. Except for an occasional slip, Adele Szold Seltzer has done a very creditable piece of work in the translation of the book.

The title "Books in General" (Doran) has a miscellaneous sound that is justified by its contents. It is a collection of informal essays on every conceivable topic by one Solomon Eagle. (That is the perfectly diaphanous mask of a well-known English editor and poet. It would take more than a pen name to disguise J. C. Squire.) It is an astonishing mixture of delightful little sketches and quite deadly editorials, but the writer's sense of humor usually saves him in the nick of time from becoming too didactic. This volume is the third of his series of the same name.

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"Princesses, kings, imperial things, visions of distant countries or impossible ones" animate the verse of Ruben Dario, as he states in the poem which the translator has chosen to open "Prosas Profanas" (N. L. Brown). This delicate and sensuous Central American poet evokes successfully for his readers his dream of ancient and richly beautiful things. His psyche does not regard with any attention or affection the sociological struggle of man, nor respond to the incitement of skyscrapers or stock yards. On the contrary he is fascinated to watch

Above the blue water the knight Lohengrin
And his swan, just as if it were
A chiselled drifting iceberg
With its neck arched in the form of a letter S.

Charles B. McMichael is responsible for this short selection translated in some cases from rhyme into what he calls free verse, which is really prose. There is a short preface treating the poet biographically.

However the people of this country may have agreed or disagreed with him in politics, the personality of "Greatheart" unquestionably appealed strongly to everyone, and readers of "My Brother Theodore Roosevelt" by Corinne Roosevelt Robinson (Scribner) will enjoy the intimate personal anecdotes therein pleasingly recorded of that typical American. The volume contains numerous pictures of Colonel Roosevelt from boyhood up.

Just wherein lies the secret of Zane Grey's popularity, is a mystery that has long baffled reviewers. His books invariably follow a fairly definite recipe—so much wholesale murder to so much noble sentiment, a large gob of red-blooded love stuff and a dash of Dr. Frank Crane moralizing —and there you have the Zane Grey home brew. Presumably for some it has considerable kick. Others, and less fortunate, of us it merely makes violently ill. "To the Last Man" (Harper) is the story of a feud.

The compilation of the small poetic output of Henry Martyn Hoyt under the title "Dry Points" (Shay) was, we believe, an unhappy inspiration. For the line is often blurred with color, although these rhymed pieces are interesting and never strained. William Rose Benét in his reminiscence-colored biographical sketch of "Henry", imparts the flavor of the charming and vivid personality of this painter "sworn to service against dulness, deadness, contemporary cant and tyranny and ancient sham". "The Master of the World", a one-act play in prose which fills out the little volume, is a human and happily ironic evaluation of the Diogenes-Alexander the Great encounter.

"America and the Young Intellectual", by Harold Stearns (Doran), is an attempt to reconcile present industrial and sociological unrest with the aspirations of the rising generation. Just what the young intellectual is striving for is problematic, since he is principally an iconoclast. Still, these essays ramble through fields of sweet-smelling platitudes to the conclusion that the young intellectual of today (whatever that anomaly may be) hasn't a chance—with the H. C. L., low wages paid to brains, etc., etc., *ad infinitum*, how can the budding genius get anywhere? Which may be true, or not. Being still under forty, ergo young, priding ourself on our intellect, and being happy in this vale (perhaps *veil* would be more accurate) of tears, we are inclined to

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ask Mr. Stearns: "What's all the shootin' fer?"

Imaginative reality—if the paradox may stand—is grimly diffused through "Brazilian Tales" (Four Seas) translated by Isaac Goldberg. Any nation could be proud to have these stories in its contemporary literature. Death stalks rather prominently through the small book, taking his toll freely. For those who enjoy unpleasant things well done, here are thrills, a bitter laugh, a gasp and a tear.

Alexander Black does not exactly say "the latest thing" in the volume of essays published under that title (Harper). But he states very well, in a new form, some truths which have been emphasized many times before; he writes ironically and to telling effect on themes so diverse as "Foreigners" and "Looking Literary", "The Truth About Women" and "The Dictatorship of the Dull". Many of his subjects are of no great significance, yet he makes them interesting; most of his essays make no attempt at an overburdening intellectual content, yet they are suited not only to please the reader, but to stimulate thought. And one and all are valuable as presenting a fresh and open-minded point of view toward literature, art, or the problems of contemporary life.

Octavus Roy Cohen's "Midnight" (Dodd, Mead) is an intriguing detective story contingent on the murder of a man of wealth and position. The charming fiancée of the murdered man, her brother, the beautiful and unhappy wife of a middle-aged financier, her sister the young flapper who plays such an important part in untangling the mystery, a valet, a taxi driver, and the chief of police are all well drawn characters who fit smoothly into the plot and in their turn excite our sympathy, amusement, and distrust, feeding the flame of curiosity to the end.

Most people like to talk about their famous friends, and Hesketh Pearson does so with great unction in a book called "Modern Men and Mummers" (Harcourt, Brace). There are a few interesting though one-sided portraits of such men as Bernard Shaw, Sir Herbert Tree, and Frank Harris, and a quantity of absurdly inadequate sketches of other literary and theatrical celebrities. Mr. Pearson himself says, " . . . the American public like reading stupid things about eminent people . . . " That is undoubtedly the reason for this American edition.

Quite a different type from "An American Idyll" is Cornelia Stratton Parker's new book, "Working with the Working Woman" (Harper). It is a very readable account of her experiences in factory, laundry, and hotel, where she took the humblest jobs and sought as close an association as possible with her companions. She has remembered that you catch more flies with honey than with vinegar, so she uses an easy narrative style, many humorous anecdotes, and an optimistic viewpoint, which gets her points across as well as the most learned treatise on social conditions. It is guaranteed unadultered by propaganda and well worth reading.

Eden Phillpotts's latest book, "Pan and the Twins" (Macmillan), is a pleasant result of his exercising his imagination, his philosophy, and his

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sense of humor. It is placed in a strangely up-to-date period, the Roman decadence, and traces the fortunes of two youths who are helped and advised by the friendly god, Pan. It is a grave injustice to imagine Pan merely as a picturesque woodland deity; he is here shown to possess the combined wisdom of Solomon, Socrates, and Freud. The twins, having been separated in their childhood, have very different careers, the one becoming a Christian while the other remains Pagan, proving conclusively what thoroughly good fellows the Pagans were. There is a strong philosophical slant to the book, but one never loses sight of the twinkle in the author's eye.

Were it not for Isaac Marcosson, who would know that negroes, living in the very shadow of the equator, die in large numbers from pneumonia before reaching the age of forty; or that æroplane traffic has been extensively developed in the Congo; or that coal can be bought in Capetown for one-fourth the price at Teneriffe, England? Jumping kangaroo-like from personality to personality, the journalist's record of "An African Adventure" (Lane) manages to include facts wholly amazing and enlightening about the business situation in South Africa.

"The Dragon in Shallow Waters" (Putnam) by V. Sackville-West is a story for those who like unnatural atmosphere and unpleasant people. The original situation is bad enough, and it is drawn out by a succession of morbidly horrible developments. Despite a real literary quality and some brilliantly vivid description, this is not a book that one can be said to enjoy. The central figure is a vicious blind man with a destructive mania, so you can judge for yourself.

"What Next in Europe?" by Frank A. Vanderlip (Harcourt, Brace) sums up the miseries, the desolation, the starvation, the chaos growing out of the war and out of treaties "conceived in hatred and malice". Then it suggests measures for the commercial and economic rehabilitation of the stricken nations, with America shirking none of her plain obligations.

Back to the grey days, or the gay days—according to whether or not one has eaten red meat for breakfast—when the vikings infested British swamps, toured Iceland in summer, killed bulls and serfwomen for the sacrifice, and buried the swords of their dead relations with them, lest their feuds live after. Gunnar Gunnarsson, authentic descendant of the saga heroes, digs down into the pockets of his ancestors and finds treasures of virtue. Lief and Ingolf, who swore brotherhood at the spring festival, letting their blood mingle on the brown scarred earth, fight the sons of Atle Jarl for supremacy in the homeland and are driven out. Taking their wives, cattle, and the carved pillars of the chief-seat aboard their high-prowed boats they set sail for Iceland, and here Lief who would not sacrifice to the gods is killed. A stern, robust panorama of living, with always the wing of an implacable fate hovering over. "The Sworn Brothers" is one of the Gyldendal books now being brought out in this country by Alfred A. Knopf.

"The Real Japanese Question" by K. K. Kawakami (Macmillan) is a

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Japanese-American's plea for mutual concession and tolerance as a means for healing real and "bogey" differences which have arisen between the two countries. The author, who favors continued restriction of Japanese immigration, presents his arguments in a manner which commands respect. The book is well worth perusal.

An unfulfilled promise is one of the most difficult things in life to forgive, and the publishers of this latest volume of Michael Arlen claim so much for it that we find it hard even to acknowledge its true merits. Light and artificial both in style and substance, "The Romantic Lady" (Dodd, Mead), which consists of four sketches of present-day women—and men, is not lacking in a certain charm and sparkle. But these "romantic ladies", inconsequential, alluring, yet decidedly intangible, are not the real living beings that are the men of the tales, in spite of the author's efforts to explain their every innermost thought.

"The Life of Clara Barton" by William E. Barton (Houghton Mifflin) is a book for the orthodox-minded that the rebellious should acknowledge. Miss Barton's letters give an interesting personal account of the Civil War and the organization of the American Red Cross for which she was mainly responsible; and the adulation of the biographer is not offensive enough to spoil the reader's admiration for the subject of the biography. The book will probably become a companion piece to "The Life of Alice Freeman Palmer".

"The Evolution of Modern Medicine" by Sir William Osler (Yale) describes the advance of medicine from the time prehistoric man applied "simples" and crude bandages to wounds caused by wild beasts and reptiles, up to the present age of scientific achievement. Despite its rather formidable title, the subject matter may reasonably be described as of a popular character.

The not-too-old to long for a vision of romantic France and the not-too-young to enjoy a slow, casual method of sightseeing will like to take a sentimental journey in "The Car That Went Abroad" (Harper). It was the ancient sort that cranked in front, burned out the linings of its brakes rather frequently, and even in the Cévennes mountains, slid halfway down backward, with loss of prestige in native eyes. Yet in one year and four months from Hoboken to Hoboken, as Albert Bigelow Paine puts it, the car measured the length of France and part of Switzerland, in all weather via roadside luncheons amazingly cheap, and unplotted nights at an inn with a courtyard and a sign "garage gratis". There are 100% American chapters on learning to speak French and "The Chateau I Did Not Rent", and one about finding Mark Twain's long lost head of Napoleon in the outline of hills near Beauchastel. We have the biographer's word for it that Mark Twain discovered here, while making a pilgrimage through the Vosges mountains, a gigantic natural profile, of which afterward he bitterly regretted losing track. Descriptions of a Marseilles street, with its dark bulging trams and its rows of winking red and green lights strung steeply up from the water front, and of a long white road, wind-swept through ragged Provençal trees, are not forgotten soon.

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THE BOOKMAN'S MONTHLY SCORE

Compiled by Frank Parker Stockbridge in Cooperation with the American Library Association

The following list of books in demand in the public libraries of the United States during February has been compiled from reports made by two hundred representative libraries in every section of the country and in cities of all sizes down to ten thousand population.

Book distribution has been so improved since the war, and book advertising and reviewing have become so standardized, that there is no longer any important difference between what New England reads and San Francisco's taste. Through the efforts of such organizations as the American Library Association and the national publishers' associations, the United States is rapidly becoming, if it has not already become, a literary unit, so to speak. Therefore THE BOOKMAN *will hereafter discontinue the sectional analysis of Books in Demand and present instead the ten books, both fiction and non-fiction, in greatest demand throughout the entire country.*

FICTION

1. If Winter Comes	*A. S. M. Hutchinson*	LITTLE, BROWN
2. Helen of the Old House	*Harold Bell Wright*	APPLETON
3. Her Father's Daughter	*Gene Stratton-Porter*	DOUBLEDAY
4. Main Street	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT
5. The Pride of Palomar	*Peter B. Kyne*	COSMOPOLITAN
6. To the Last Man	*Zane Grey*	HARPER
7. Brass	*Charles G. Norris*	DUTTON
8. The Brimming Cup	*Dorothy Canfield*	HARCOURT
9. Three Soldiers	*John Dos Passos*	DORAN
10. The Girls	*Edna Ferber*	DOUBLEDAY

GENERAL BOOKS

1. The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
2. Queen Victoria	*Lytton Strachey*	HARCOURT
3. The Mirrors of Washington	*Anonymous*	PUTNAM
4. The Mirrors of Downing Street	*Anonymous*	PUTNAM
5. The Americanization of Edward Bok	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER
6. Margot Asquith: An Autobiography	*Margot Asquith*	DORAN
7. Woodrow Wilson as I Know Him	*Joseph P. Tumulty*	DOUBLEDAY
8. Mystic Isles of the South Seas	*Frederick O'Brien*	CENTURY
9. The Glass of Fashion	*Anonymous*	PUTNAM
10. My Life Here and There	*Princess Cantacuzène*	SCRIBNER

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FOREIGN NOTES AND COMMENT

Grillparzer

ON January 12, 1821, Lord Byron, then in Italy, made the following entry in his diary: "Midnight. Read the Italian translation by Guido Sorelli of the German Grillparzer—a devil of a name, to be sure, for posterity; but they *must* learn to pronounce it. And *who is he?* I know him not; but *ages will.*" It was the greatest literary prophecy Byron ever made, and one of the greatest that has ever been made in literary history.

At that time Grillparzer had published his "Ancestress", "Sappho", a few poems and some aphorisms. He was working on "The Golden Fleece", a dramatic trilogy superior to anything Austria had then produced, and worthy to take its place alongside the best that had come out of Weimar. But this was all. And of this little Byron was acquainted only with "Sappho". His other dramas, critiques, poems, diaries, and short stories were then unwritten.

Born at Vienna in 1791, Grillparzer died at Vienna, January 21, 1872, or fifty years ago. What a life! How impossible it would be for an American writer to live it! He made a stir in the dramatic circles of Austria with his "Ancestress" and then they were about through with him. The Germans of course would not know of him: he was an Austrian, he came from the land of Metternich, he immortalized, not Bismarck or Moltke, but Radetzky. During his last thirty years he was unknown to the people he loved. He had dramatized characters who plainly stood for Napoleon or some defeated Hapsburg, and the Austrian censor forbade the performance of his plays. Well and good, he said, I'll keep quiet.

Later he died. Austria came to and began to do him homage. Vienna gave him a funeral such as she had given no man since the death (1827) of Beethoven. The Burgtheater began to perform his plays. Critics began to look into his works, to bring out new editions of them, to collect his diaries and edit his apothegms, so that today there is a Grillparzer *Jahrbuch* in many volumes and a quite sizable library of articles on him. In this country up to the outbreak of the Great War, the American professor of German who had not published something on Grillparzer was considered just a little inert.

Since the war Germany has referred to Grillparzer as a German, in contradistinction to an *Austrian* poet. She calls the attention of the world to the fact that Hauptmann dramatized his "Castle by Sendomir" and entitled the resulting play "Elga". She says that Nietzsche always admired Grillparzer and that Gottfried Keller worshiped him. This is true, but Keller was a Swiss. Nietzsche was not a representative man, and Hauptmann merely profited from Grillparzer, while his German compatriots did all they could to advance the cause of the Prussian Wilhelm von Kleist as opposed to the Viennese Grillparzer.

The fiftieth anniversary of the death of no other German-speaking

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writer known to literary history could be so construed or approached as to merit discussion in this section of THE BOOKMAN. Grillparzer's can for a number of reasons. One, the manner in which Germany is now trying to lay claim to him, I pass over with the single observation that it is he who makes the Germans feel that Austria should be annexed. And indeed what Lloyd George and his "big" associates forbade, at least by implication, may be accomplished because of what a bachelor clerk wrote. It is a marvelous tribute to Byron's hero.

Moreover, Grillparzer, sick and tired of the nonsensical censorship exercised by the Viennese police—for that is all the Austrian censors then were—went out one day, while still in the plenitude of his powers, and bought a strong box somewhat after the fashion of Ray Stannard Baker's steel affair. Whatever he wrote from then on he deposited in it, and in his will left instructions that it was not to be opened until fifty years after his death. His request was honored. The time was up on January 21, 1922, when the box was taken out, placed in charge of August Sauer, the distinguished Grillparzer student of the University of Prague, and opened.

It would be jolly if we could inform the readers of THE BOOKMAN that it contained hitherto unknown and unpublished plays as great as "Libussa" and "Woe to Him Who Lies" and "The Rise and Fall of King Ottokar". But this is not the case. It contained parts of his diary, the most of which had already been published, a number of letters, a few manuscripts that have value only because Grillparzer wrote them: eighteen separate packages in all, each tied with a white ribbon, but nothing more. If the writings have value it is because of the light they throw on the quaint genius's relation to Katharina Fröhlich, his eternal fiancée, and two other women, long since forgotten, Charlotte von Paumgarten and Marie Daffinger. The other documents are scarcely worth mention. These things Franz Grillparzer kept under lock and key. And bear in mind that he finished his last drama in 1838 and died in 1872. What he might have written in those last thirty-four years had he been treated decently!

A few weeks ago, a dinner was given at the Authors' Club in London, in honor of Henry Arthur Jones, at which Sir Arthur Conan Doyle made the following protest: "It is seven years since Mr. Jones has produced a play in London ('Shame'), though he has produced plays elsewhere. I hope we are not going to have another tragedy like that of Mr. Thomas Hardy." Sir Arthur then proceeded to show that as a result of criticism which Thomas Hardy had every reason to resent, "the finest series of novels brought out in our generation had been left incomplete, unwritten". He added, however, that "Mr. Jones is too much of a fiery particle ever to be snuffed out by anybody's article".

This may be applied to Grillparzer. Had Vienna, instead of doing everything to prevent its puny, tiny Hapsburgs from being alluded to in figurative language, done something to encourage its greatest national genius, the republic of letters might have more immortal dramas to its credit than it has. But Grillparzer was snuffed out. It was not a display of weakness on his part, either. The whole thing was an incident, and a very tragic one, in his career. He

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suffered terribly from the *malheur d'être poète*. And yet, he is a powerful force in Austria today where art treasures are being peddled for rolls. University professors solemnly gather about a box containing harmless scraps from his pen while documents from royal hands that once meant life and death to states are stored in cellars, disagreeable souvenirs of an unhealthy régime that brought all this on.

Once in his life, Goethe went to Berlin. But he soon hurried away lest he be run over by a pushcart. He could not endure a large city. Grillparzer could live nowhere except in Vienna, then outranked in size only by London and Paris. A few words concerning the funeral his *liebe Kaiserstadt* gave him may throw light on the man.

He died suddenly on Sunday and was buried three days later. It is a long distance from Spiegelgasse in which he lived to the Währinger Cemetery, and as the procession moved along the streets, multitudes fell in, not so much out of honor to the poet as from tradition. It was a celebration. At the cemetery gate Heinrich Laube, intimately associated once with our own Carl Schurz, pronounced the *oraison funèbre*. Laube had written a history of German literature but is said not to have read a line of Grillparzer at the time. We may imagine that he spoke from the heart more than the head.

This over, the then common Viennese custom of having each one present take a little shovel and cast some earth over the coffin was observed. By the time the funeral party was ready to turn the grave over to the grave diggers it was dark—and just then the curtain went up, back in Vienna, on the stage to which Grillparzer had presented his immortal plays, though it was not one of his that was given. Business had to proceed.

Moreover, Kaiser Franz Josef had ordered a court ball for that evening. As the funeral party returned to the city, the cornets began to blare, the cymbals to tinkle, and the fair ladies and chivalric gentlemen of proud Austria to dance. The officers who had attended the funeral in full dress uniform went direct from the grave to the ballroom. It was not an act of special meanness on the part of the Kaiser, for he had not known that Grillparzer was going to die. No one indeed found it at all strange, except some royalists from Paris who objected because January 21 was the anniversary of the execution of Louis XVI, consort of Marie Antoinette and son-in-law of Maria Theresa. That was and that is the Vienna which Franz Grillparzer so passionately loved.

ALLEN WILSON PORTERFIELD

French Magazines

SHALL we leave books aside, and take a glance at some reviews and magazines? They will tell us of books anyway, or show us fragments of coming books, or complain about books—one does not so easily escape from them.

No use dwelling upon such venerable institutions as "La Revue des Deux Mondes" and "Le Correspondant". Like the French Academy, the majesty of the lion, the glory of the sunset, the genius of Paul Claudel, there is not much to say about them, that has not been said before. They do not call for any comment, and even

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less for an introduction. Now, supposing that we are interested in the periodicals which express or reflect the intellectual activity of France at present; supposing (to take a familiar case among practical instances of everyday life) that we should be stranded on a desert island, with a right to receive regularly seven French periodicals, which ones should we want sent to us?

Of course the old "Mercure" should be one of them. We shall not abandon it, under the pretext that younger magazines have been born since the days of Remy de Gourmont's "Dialogues des Amateurs", when Alfred Vallette's review was by far the best. These days are no longer, but the "Mercure de France" still contains enough to keep our attention, were it only for its critical notes and its survey of foreign literatures, perhaps the most complete in the world.

The place occupied twenty years ago by the "Mercure", is now filled by "La Nouvelle Revue Française". Since it was founded, in 1908, by a group which has faithfully kept its original purpose of "defense and illustration of high French literature", the success of the "N. R. F." has been steadily growing. Its *notes* are the most valuable current history of French letters. Jacques Rivière is now the editor. Its publishing firm has become one of the most prosperous in France, with names like those of Gide, Valéry, Proust, Larbaud, Conrad, Tagore, Verhaeren, on its book covers. The Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier is one of the offspring of the "N. R. F."

"Les Ecrits Nouveaux", with a similar purpose, is a younger publication, with a less strict standard, and sometimes greater freedom. It assumes no critical attitude.

On the right (politically speaking) we find "La Revue Hebdomadaire", under the guidance of François Le Grix; it gives a weekly survey of life and letters, from a decidedly conservative and Catholic angle (many Academicians are contributors); it is a commendable review for society readers, and it shows enough quality and variety to remain vivid and significant.

At the left, on the radical side, the sparkling "Crapouillot", under Jean Galtier-Boissière and a handful of young liberals, artists who were fighters in the last war and have sickened of the usual catchwords, always retaining their sense of humor. "Le Crapouillot" (The Trench Mortar) must sometimes be painful reading to politicians, and to the pompous personages belonging to the race of Polonius. It affords a pretty good inside view of the attitude of a large part of the younger generation.

As a moderate, well informed weekly, covering literature and the arts as well as politics (and especially international politics), "L'Europe Nouvelle" and its contributors deserve special attention. It has established the good habit of publishing in full the important political documents (treaties, historical debates, etc.), so that a collection of the issues of "L'Europe Nouvelle" is becoming a precious manual of contemporary history.

As a seventh member of our group, I want to include "Feuillets d'Art", now under the direction of Lucien Vogel, the enterprising and discriminating editor of the "Gazette du Bon Genre". It is a luxurious, beautifully presented publication, with six issues a year, and many reproductions *hors texte*. The American edition is called "The Living Arts". The

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last issue contained stories by André Salmon, P. Mac Orlan, poems by Max Jacob, articles on the Russian painters Jacovleff and Soudeikine, on Daumier's drawings, on new interior decorations by A. Groult and Ch. Martin, and a musical article, concerning Brazil in the eighteenth century, by H. Prunières.

Here is advice enough for those who want to keep informed on things, books, and ideas from France. To be even more precise, shall we say that subscription prices in France range from thirty to ninety francs a year for each of these seven reviews (meaning from twenty to sixty cents a month)?

A last piece of information, as this is almost the season for American travelers to embark. Those who want acquaintance with *all* the young, half-young, extra-young, new-born, and still-born magazines, will find a complete stock of them at No. 7, rue de l'Odéon (La Maison des Amis des Livres), a place about which there is much to tell as a centre for literature and art. Around the corner, rue Dupuytren, there is Sylvia Beach's American bookshop. Whoever sees Paris, the Louvre, the rue de la Paix, the Ritz, the American consulate, and misses the two places mentioned above, and never opens any of the seven magazines described in these notes, ought to be shot without further trial on his or her first attempt to *talk* about France.

PIERRE DE LANUX

The Decay in Italian Fiction

NOT much good can be said of the numerous novels recently published. A notable fact is the abundance of women writers. In this short period more novels written by women have been published in Italy than has been the case for several years. I have quite a number here before me: most of them, however, of very indifferent value. Clarice Tartufari in "Il Dio Nero" (Bemporad, Florence) shows really fine gifts as a fictionist. But her novel, still of the war, is full of mannerisms and is far from being a work of art, with its conventional and most quietly unnatural personages. Of an inferior order is Eleonora Grey's "Dissonanze" (Bemporad, Florence); such a hesitating novel is hardly fit for publication. Milly Dandolo is a real—albeit still imperfect—fictionist in "Il Figlio del Mio Dolore" (Treves, Milano). This, her first novel, has formal and architectural faults; its greyness is perhaps too marked, the heroine's psychology is described with studied mannerism: but on the whole this novel reveals qualities which cannot be denied and which make us look forward hopefully to this young writer's future work. I would willingly mention other novels written by women were they worth it, but I must content myself with mentioning "Il Segreto dell'Uomo Solitario" (Treves, Milan) by Grazia Deledda, the personal Sardinian novelist. It is one of her best novels but it reveals a new aspect of this indefatigable fictionist. Térésah's "L'Ombra sul Muro", a series of short stories (Bemporad, Florence), does not reveal works of art, but we can enjoy the gossipy vein that this novelist possesses, and her ability to write without the least affectation and without any scholastic pretension. Such pretension is Annie Vivanti's defect; one would be severe on her volume of narrative prose, "Gioia" (Bemporad, Florence), did not the Carduccian recollections at the end of the vol-

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ume save the situation by their playful grace, making up for the uninteresting quality of almost all the rest of the book.

If the women do not go beyond the average, the men fare no better. I do not mean to take as a point of reference, in stating this, Arturo Colautti's posthumous novel, "Primadonna" (Bemporad, Florence), for it does not interest the Italian critic, nor does it interest anyone. The author used to write ugly and artificial verses, but he was better known as an "irredento" than otherwise. I can take Giuseppe Lipparini's last novel "I 4 Fanti" (Vallecchi, Florence) as a point of reference. Lipparini is, above all, a poet who with Parnassian inspiration gave life to a lyric poetry which will not die; as a fictionist also his work is excellent: "L'Osteria delle Tre Gore" is undoubtedly his best piece of writing. But last year in "Gli Amori della Giovine Aurora" (Vallecchi, Florence) and now in "I 4 Fanti" he seems to have lost his power as a fictionist, and above all his ability to create a work of art. His latest book tries to depict the postwar Italian period: tells of four disabled war heroes and furnishes a study of their psychology and of the corrupt atmosphere of the moment. But Lipparini sees only the trivialities of the spiritual crisis of the disabled, of their tragedy, in fact of all the complexity of the Italian postwar period; and his narrative, imbedded in the tritest commonplaceness, is without artistic quality. Ardengo Soffici, also a bizarre spirit, an excellent writer, with Tuscan clearness sought to anticipate the "Fascimo" in republishing recently "Lemmonio Boreo" (Vallecchi, Florence), a patched up and enlarged edition of a volume which appeared about ten years ago when this novel had a meaning. (I at that time defended it against attacks of the critics.) What nowadays can this futile donquixottish "Lemmonio Boreo" mean? A failure in a literary sense, this book is foolish in a political sense. Is it worth while to disinter a corpse?

Of Corrado Govoni better things can be said: not because he has given up his verse to give us "Piccolo Veleno Color di Rosa" (Bemporad, Florence), affected short stories, but for having given us "Anche l'Ombra è Sole" (Mondadori, Milan), the first part of a serial novel which will bear the unlovely and rhetorical title of "Giovinezza, Fermati; Sei Bella!" This first part tells perhaps at too great length (although one cannot as yet give definite judgment) of the childhood and youth of the hero, with admirable freshness and in a lively and excellent style. When the second and last part, "La Terra contro il Cielo", appears I can give more particulars and a more conclusive judgment on the whole work.

But this hasty sketch gives me, whether I wish it or not, matter for judging present-day Italian fiction. The want of humanism, the want of power to represent that which is the whirlwind of life, the conformity to readymade schemes, are the principal reasons for the decay of Italian fiction today. There are no signs of improvement; this field is hopeless. Novels and short stories no longer call forth artistic expression; they do not represent a writer's personality in the art of writing: they are solely the expression of a trade whereby many an excellent youth earns his bread and butter, in the same fashion that he would take up a profession, or get a job. This is an unpleasant truth.

GEROLAMO LAZZERI

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German Children's Books and Others

AMID the flood of books, novels, poems, plays, memoirs, and works of serious art and literature that crowd the reviewer's table, there alights, like a bevy of butterflies, shining with all the colors of the aniline dye vat, a happy swarm of children's books. Although published by Gerhard Stalling in Oldenburg, they bear the alluring title of "Nürnburger Bilderbücher".

An amusing idea gives rise to the book whose English title would be, "What is everything made of?" Here, elaborated in clever verses and illustrated lavishly, is the explanation of the origin of common things—bread, butter, coffee, tea, chocolate, sugar, rice, etc. By far the most original and delightful of the "Bilderbücher", however, is the "Nürnburger Puppenstuben Speilbuch". Here, in successive pages, are all the rooms of a well appointed house. And this house is alive—practicable. The doors open, as well as the cupboards; the furniture can be moved from place to place; and the man of the house, his wife, children, and servants can wander from bathroom to attic and back. The happy child who possesses such a wonder book as this can make himself a new picture book for every day.

Friedrich Kircheisen, the greatest Napoleon expert in Germany, is publishing through Georg Müller of Munich, a "History of Napoleon" in ten volumes. Volume V has recently appeared. Napoleon enthusiasts eagerly await the publication of each new volume, for this mighty work of erudition comprises all the known material of any significance relating to the great Corsican. Kircheisen's bibliography alone comprises 200,000 titles!

The series of African myths and legends which the renowned traveler Leo Frobenius is publishing with Diederichs of Jena under the title of "Atlantis", has been enriched by two new volumes—"The Fabulous in the Kabyle Myths", and "Bardic Legends of the Sahel". The most amazing thing about these naïve, richly imaginative and most engaging tales is, apart from their natural Rabelaisianism, the extremely high moral culture which they reveal. These Sahel legends are immensely old. They treat of a time long prior to Greek or Roman history, and have been handed down all the centuries by word of mouth, until at last they reached Frobenius's eager ear and recording hand. The Kabyle myths are not quite so old, but they can also show a respectable antiquity. Among them one finds a "Puss in Boots" tale, in which the inimitable Grimalkin is represented by a monkey, whom his master, a fisherman, rescues from the sea. His mother-wit secures for his master a Princess bride. Then there is the story of the Faithful Hans, whose name in Kabyle is Delesim. The story is still more touching and beautiful in its African dress.

There is an absence of the feeling for revenge, an idea of true comradeship, a conception of knightly honor, and a love of truth and innocence of treachery in these stories which we are surprised to find in primitive African races and which make many of the old European folk stories look very suspiciously like products of a lower civilization. Frobenius prefaces these volumes, so important to folk lore students, with scientific studies of the ways and history of the Sahel tribes. The Kabyle cultural history was narrated in the earlier volumes of "Atlantis".

ETHEL TALBOT SCHEFFAUER

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THE GOSSIP SHOP

COMMENCING with the May issue THE BOOKMAN will be published in England through Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton. To avoid confusion with THE BOOKMAN (English) published by that firm and well known in the United States, a special cover has been designed which reads "The American Bookman". It gives us great pleasure to undertake this new venture. We hope that it will serve, in a small way, to create a better understanding of our American writing and writers in England. If our new English readers, therefore, will be kind enough to send us gossipy letters concerning their own literary reactions, it will aid us in keeping this department alive for them. We shall also welcome any criticisms or suggestions from England as to format or content.

The "Forty-second Street set" in New York City no longer says, "I get you", and "Do you get me?" The thing now is, "I *make* you", and "Do you *make* me?" Frank Adams was divulging this. Doctor Canby was discoursing on the new rhythm in contemporary American prose. Gene Saxton was remarking that it had never occurred to him as funny until he had been for some years away from the city of his birth, that the inhabitants of Baltimore refer to the Baltimore "Sun", never as the "Sun", but always as "the 'Sun' paper". Frank Shay was contending that all editions of "Moby Dick" before 1920 were expurgated. Alfred Harcourt was arguing that it is never the theme that carries a novel to success but the characters in it. Logan Pearsall Smith, honor guest of the evening, was vivaciously considering who would be England's next "grand old man" of letters. Chris Morley, host, in a monumental throne chair, was explaining the little understood point that a columnist doesn't mention the work of his friends because it is the work of his friends, but that he mentions work which he admires and later on quite naturally he is likely to become friends with the authors of

Logan Pearsall Smith

the work he has fancied. Russell Loines was listening to everybody. Cortes Holliday was telling the story of his dilemma recently in a small town in the middle west, where he had hesitated to inquire the way to Main Street for fear of hurting somebody's feelings, and had asked instead to be directed to the principal street of the town.

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The dinner was given at The Players. It was Mr. Smith's first visit to the land of his birth in something over thirty years. A vote was taken on what he should read. This is the list: "The Old Soak", "The Story of Mankind", "The Big Town", "Alice Adams", "Miss Lulu Bett", "Old Pioneers", "Peeps at People", "Stamboul Nights", "Smoke and Steel". The author of "Trivia" and "Stories from the Bible", and now "More Trivia", looks a good deal like that very handsomely aristocratic man C. D. Gibson, in a most excellent humor.

A number of persons have surmised that "Alice Adams" was a reply to "Main Street". A recent caller on Booth Tarkington at his home in Indianapolis reports that Mr. Tarkington has never read "Main Street". And, further, that he had never heard of the celebrated younger generation in American literature. Didn't know such a thing was going on. Seemed to be much interested by the news of it.

After all, why should he? There isn't; that is, not really. Of course, we think it a pity that one of our idols does not read "The Literary Review", that publication which devotes so large an amount of space to arguments *pro and con* the "younger generation" without ever once, we believe, defining just what is meant by the term. Is this "younger generation" an age or merely an attitude? If it is an age, the definition of "young" must be fifty or under; for at least one of the so-called younger novelists would be pleased to be considered middle-aged. If it is an attitude, do these critics care to be placed with the "older generation"? Do they, then, attempt to place in the same category so radical a critic as Gilbert Seldes, so impudent a critic as John V. A. Weaver, or so conservative a critic as Joseph Wood Krutch or Malcolm Cowley. Does the "younger generation" mean, perhaps, F. Scott Fitzgerald alone, with his attendant flappers, male and female? Personally, we don't believe in any generation, young or old; let's have done with this talk, which seems to us to have become a trifle bitter and exceedingly destructive. If the self-styled elders mean "liberal" and "conservative" by "younger" and "older", why don't they say so? In case that is what they mean, age has nothing to do with it. If they mean "professorial" and "non-professorial", then, too, age has nothing to do with it. It makes no difference to us, editorially, whether an honest workman is eighteen or eighty. We are inclined to think that, whether he knows it or not, Booth Tarkington is a member of what these critics mean by the "younger generation", and that, unless these critics with a chip on their shoulder have a care, they will take on the boy characteristics they deplore in the so-called unbalanced young and become, in their own sense, members of the disagreeable "younger generation".

The most exciting first night we have ever attended was the opening performance in any theatre of the first third of the Theatre Guild's incredible production of George Bernard Shaw's "Back to Methuselah". It was not so much that the play was exciting—it is more astonishing than exciting—but that the audience was, theatrically speaking, unbelievable. It is useless to mention names. Everyone in the world of books and the

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stage (or very nearly) was there. Lee Simonson had done his best for this event. His importation of a new lantern for throwing scenes on the stage through painted slides, and his use of a gold gauze curtain, made the Garden of Eden more beautiful than any single stage set we have ever seen. The Misses Lewisohn of the Neighborhood Playhouse who produced this much of the Shaw cycle showed daring and intelligence in interpretation. It was an evening of large experimentation. At the Drama League dinner Mr. Simonson explained that when one took a play of Mr. Shaw's, one actually married it; for in the contract appear words something like this, "The play shall not be changed for better or for worse". This makes cutting impossible. Yet in spite of Mr. Shaw's dilatory manner, in spite of scenes of interminable excursion, the Theatre Guild has still one more success, and has thus far been successful with an undertaking so stupendous that it was, at first, hard to believe. We approach the second round of Mr. Shaw's three-ring bout expectantly. The curtain will arise at seven-thirty, and coffee will be served between the acts to stimulate the intellect. Perhaps we do not fully realize just how important from several standpoints this production is. It means, not only that Mr. Shaw has been able to present an entire philosophy to an eager public; but that the playwright need no longer feel himself restricted to three acts and a possible fourth. Perhaps Eugene O'Neill's steel trilogy, of which we hear rumors, will be produced in this manner. A new theatre was dedicated this month, Earl Carroll's Theatre, which is said by those who know more about such things than do we, to possess the best equipped stage in New York. The dedication was gay enough, with three hundred members of the Lambs Club gamboling, with Augustus Thomas orating on the history of the stage, with champagne flowing from a bottle broken by Mrs. Carroll, with many notables present, including Will R. Edrington, who gave Mr. Carroll the theatre. The first night at this playhouse disclosed Mr. Carroll's own Russian melodrama "Bavu". Here is a workshop that should delight the heart of any producer. It remains to be seen just what Mr. Carroll will do with it. At "The First Man", Eugene O'Neill's somewhat obstetrical play, we met Dorothy Donnelly. There was an interesting audience at the Neighborhood Playhouse to greet this first showing, an audience composed not only of those from uptown seeking wisdom, but of the clientele of that eager little playhouse itself, a clientele that is growing and developing an extraordinarily intelligent audience for the difficult play. We liked Mr. Duncan's production of a play that must have been baffling. It will cause much discussion among women, though. We can testify as to that. Our family has quarreled over it ever since. This shows vitality in a play.

The poems in the January magazines offered little variety. We found very few that we liked at all, at all. Here they are: "Four Poems" by Robert J. Roe (Contemporary Verse); "American Indian Myth Poems: The Wet Grass of Morning" by Hartley Alexander (Scribner's); "Now Speak of Love No More" by Babette Deutsch (Lyric West); "Ah Gabriel—" by Winifred Welles (Measure); "Sonnet to My Wife" by Maxwell Bodenheim

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(Double-Dealer); "Beware!" by Elinor Wylie (New Republic); "Sin" by Anna Wickham (New Republic).

William Lyon Phelps

In these days of increased prosperity in the book world, of advancing interest in literature, of spreading knowledge of books, we sometimes forget the men and the women who, during the past ten years, have spread the spirit of book enthusiasm from the lecture platform. Because they *are* enthusiasts, they are often misunderstood by the select few of definite and select prejudices. There is Professor Copeland at Harvard, Brander Matthews at Columbia, Richard Burton at Michigan, Jessie Rittenhouse for "Poetry", even the redoutable John Cowper Powys, and many more of these pioneers. We know best William Lyon Phelps of Yale, whose great classes sit, even through spring days, and laugh at anecdotes which, trivial often in themselves, bring football captains to a glimpse of Browning and tea dancers to a discovery that a judicious use of Tennyson on a moonlight evening has excellent social usages. The ability to develop interest in an audience of diverse types for some topic with which few of them are familiar, and to hold that interest, requires genius of a peculiar type. This gift Professor Phelps has, to an amazing degree. There he stands quiet, slightly rotund, smiling, sure. He has an unfailing sense of the dramatic. He has the true sixth sense in relation to his hearers. We firmly believe that he could interest an audience of bricklayers in the literary and we believe just as firmly that he could interest an audience of the literary, in brick. Such is the power of oratory. We remember that a librarian once told us that a book of criticism by Professor Phelps did more to stimulate reading on the particular topic with which he had dealt, than any other one factor she knew. This was no small thing; for she showed us enlightening figures on Archibald Marshall and the Russian novelists. This is, indeed, the power of the critic!

John Russell, the young American author of "Where the Pavement Ends", that book of South Sea stories which were so enthusiastically received in England before they were at all read in this country, sent a long and entertaining letter to Thomas F. Ford of the Los Angeles "Times" called "Harem Hunting in South Seas". We quote a part:

> Meanwhile, please understand me. There is romance in the South Seas. There is a paradise in the Pacific. They are there for anyone to seek and to find. My only point is that they cannot be found with a guide-book of clap-trap sensationalism nor sought with the expectations of a week-end slumming trip. . . . . After all, and for all the profits of fakery, truth remains a scarce and a precious commodity. You cannot buy a Cook's ticket to paradise — or to hell, either, for that matter. The things worth knowing and the things worth seeing in the Pacific were never made up for a peep-show, and the other things are not there.

From Sheehan's book store in Detroit, from the charming Miss Galleshaw whom we remember so well because she recognized us from our picture the moment we entered her shop (how vain the Gossip is!), comes news of Detroit's literary winter. She says that Dr. Traprock, when he talked at the Detroit Athletic Club, caused such an appetite for travel that already many "Kawas" are being built in the barns of would-be explorers of the Filbert Isles.

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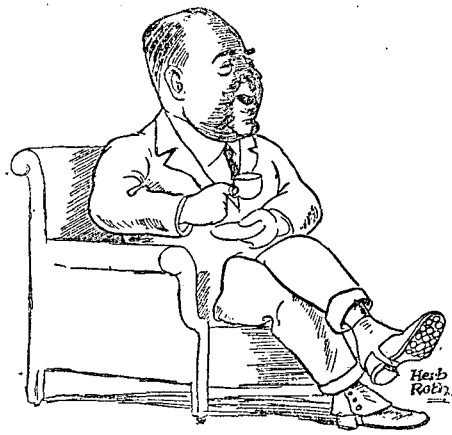
Philip Gibbs, too, visited the city of Mr. Ford, also Margot Asquith, to say nothing of that interpreter of feminine culture, W. L. George. When "asked if he noticed a tendency on the part of American women to welcome the aloofness of the English male as a relief from the alleged super-devotion of American masculinity, he remarked diffidently, that his own experiences left him with no basis for comparison!" Guido Bruno too has moved to Detroit, from which place he now edits "Bruno's Weekly". It *is* becoming a literary centre indeed!



E. Phillips Oppenheim
Reprinted from the New York "World"

E. Phillips Oppenheim, that jovial English gentleman, who believes that there is a story in every walk down the street, and has turned out the results of at least seventy walks in as many novels, has been credited, since his recent arrival in America, with being extremely disturbed about Prohibition. When we met him at luncheon recently, he seemed perfectly content. He recalled games of golf with Robert H. Davis when he was in New York eleven years ago, and baseball games which he had seen in the company of various literary gentlemen of those days. We told him, without hesitation, that after Dumas he was one of our first literary heroes, and that now he had given place only to Fielding, Sterne, and Smollett. Mr. Oppenheim is one of the most facile of writers. He spins best sellers with as great a regularity as Babe Ruth knocks out home runs. Moreover, he enjoys this life of the easeful *raconteur;* otherwise he wouldn't be able to keep the freshness which his tales always show. There is something of the visionary in Mr. Oppenheim, too. You remember that he was for many years prophesying the war with Germany. True, his portly figure, his rosy face, his twinkly eyes do not suggest the prophet; but they do show the man who understands men: golf playing business men, golf playing editors, men of the street and men in the office. He understands them and writes for their moments of relaxation. His new novel "The Great Prince Shan" is doubtless as swiftly moving as have been his stories. We haven't yet read it; but we shall. Let's hope that this gay novelist does not stay away from America for another eleven years. He adds so definite a note of normality and the joy of living to the atmosphere of literary New York. Even so early in the morning as this, it gives one a feeling of conviviality to remember him and the luncheon which Mr. H. L. Jenkins of Boston tendered him on his arrival. We have a theory that we need more books of this type at the present. We are ill at ease under the flood of the unpleasant. Perhaps we need a vacation; but with this spring day coms a definite yearning to be amused. May the always absorbing and often amusing Mr. Oppenheim live long, and may his pencil

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sharpener never dull. Or perhaps he uses a fountain pen, or is it a typewriter? We forget. At this luncheon, too, was Sidney Williams, come

Sidney Williams
Reproduction of a sketch by Raymond M. Crosby

from Philadelphia and the "North American" to greet a fellow writer of mystery tales. There's a curious fact about his "The Body in the Blue Room". Whether it was the somewhat lurid title, or whether it was the autograph on the front page, we do not know; but it is positively the first book in years which has disappeared without explanation from our shelves. We have hunted high and low. We have accused the entire Gossip Shop force of theft. To no avail. This mystery adds even more thrill to the flaunting title of this literary editor's new adventure in detective fiction.

Louis Latzarus and Alfred Capus, Paris editors, arranged recently for a duel. This is splendid. This adds zest to our work. Why not challenge editor Seldes of "The Dial" to a fight with boxing gloves? But alas! this cannot be; for only night before last we sat at the same table with Mr. Bridges of "Scribner's", Mr. Seldes himself, Mr. Canby of "The Literary Review", Mr. Haggard of "Everybody's", Mr. Bishop of "Vanity Fair", Mr. Gorman of the "Times", Mr. King of "The Literary Digest", etc., etc., and everyone was happy and no one quarreled. They all seemed pleased to see John Dos Passos, who had just returned from Beirut and other eastern points and who, after a maiden speech of one or two sentences, has vanished again. We hear that he is in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where, under academic influences, he will finish a half completed new novel. Mr. Dos Passos had little to say. He is a shy and modest youth. He expressed his surprise at the discussion which his first novel caused, and seemed pleased when he found that some people had actually read it. A hard worker, Mr. Dos Passos.

Mr. Hopper of the New York Public Library believes that the moving picture sends people to the library; at least, he was quoted in one of the New York papers as saying, in effect: "Whenever a picture like 'The Three Musketeers', 'Sentimental Tommy', 'Deception', 'Huckleberry Finn', 'The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse', or 'Miss Lulu Bett' is shown on the screen the librarians report a steady demand for the book from which it was made. Many of the people in-

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quiring for a book cannot tell who the author is, but they ask for it by the screen title and get it."

This is a somewhat new and optimistic regard for the motion picture. We believe that while the influence of the quick-moving and tabloid plot may drag down the appreciative faculties of a certain portion of the public, it is decidedly outbalanced by the *awakening* of a far greater portion. Incidentally, there is an erroneous impression among writers and the public in general concerning moving pictures and plays, that should be corrected. We know for a fact that any good scenario, story, or play can command a production somewhere, and we are willing to prove this. The dearth is not in those willing to produce in this country, but in those with the ability to *write*.

There is one scenario editor, and one producer, who telephone us at least once a month with pleading in their voices for news of good dramatic material. What's to do? We recently attended a meeting of young actors, scenic designers, and producers. There was the best talent in the country, but no *play*. Where is the great American drama? Mr. O'Neill cannot write them all.

From Denver, Colorado, Blanche Y. McNeal writes:

I am wondering if you could use some material for the Gossip Shop department from the land of William MacLeod Raine, Enos Mills, Courtney Ryley Cooper, Helen Ring Robinson, and other oncoming ones. We are a far call from the great city, but nevertheless we are a spoke in the wheel of workers—the wheel that journeys its way from Manhattan back to Manhattan—and we are doing things quite in the same spirit of earnestness as those fortunate ones who live near the heart of things printed. To wit: the Western Pen Workers numbered over a hundred at their monthly meeting last week. The kindly William MacLeod Raine gave them some much needed encouragement and advice. These same W. P. W.'s publish a magazine. Hattie Horner-Louthan is chief scribe and the motto is, "We pray thee write us down as those who boost their fellow writers."

They also foster three yearly contests—a poetry contest, an essay, and a short story contest. The Frederick W. White prize contest—a memorial to the world traveler and feature writer who was well known as F. W. W.—is offered to Colorado writers by his daughter, Lillian White Spencer. The Loafer's Club (men only) is a group of plot hunting fiends who convene weekly. Courtney Ryley Cooper most always comes down for the occasion. (Mr. Cooper, by the way, finished his year's contract consignment in seven months! He dwells in the haven of the hills, that's the reason perhaps:—quite confidentially, they say that he used nineteen dollars' worth of linoleum tacks, whatever they are, to anchor down the kitchen floor covering of his country home.)

So you see we are doing things.

SHERLOCK HOLMES

The trouble is, that what we want is Holmes. It is to be hoped that there will one day be a fresh batch of Holmes stories, for there can be no question that we shan't be happy till we get it. . . . . The mere thought of such a heavenly situation fills me with expectation. Positively Sir Arthur must give ghosts and fairies a rest and tell us some more earthly romances of the detective.

—"Simon Pure" in the December BOOKMAN

When Sherlock Holmes, ingenious man, pursued
his strange career,
We followed his deductions with an interest
sincere;
Although in time his victories monotonous became,
We must confess since he quit work life's never
been the same.

He always kept his wits on tap, he always had a
clue,
He always could foretell just what a criminal
would do;
A bit of string, a button, or a half smoked
cigarette
Made up the only evidence that Sherlock Holmes
need get.

And when he bagged his man and had him safe
behind the bars,
He'd tell the tale to Watson over coffee and
cigars;
Friend Watson then would spin a yarn from
details of the case,
And label it "The Tonkin Three" or "Mystery
of a Face".

We have detectives who are shrewd, detectives
who are wise,
Detectives who, like M. Lecoq, are experts at
disguise;
We have detectives whose brave deeds would fill
a dozen tomes,
But never one that can compare with Mr. Sherlock
Holmes.

Dupin's "Rue Morgue" deductions we today vote
rather "slow",
For Sherlock would have solved the case in half
a day or so;
The novels of Gaboriau, the tales of Mrs. Green,
Were tossed aside when Sherlock Holmes appeared
upon the scene.

So here's to Sherlock Holmes and may his glory
never dim,
And here's to his friend Watson for his faithfulness to him;
And here's to Conan Doyle, may he attain the
prophet's span,
And all his life just write of Holmes, that great
and noble man.

—*John Northern Hilliard*

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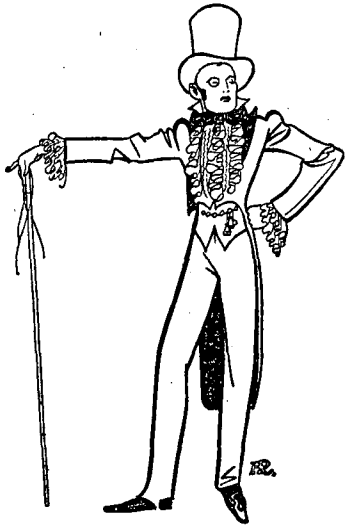

Your Gossip

The Gossip Shop has at last been publicly identified. "HE who gets Gossip for THE BOOKMAN" was interlocutor for a literary minstrel show given recently at the Civic Club in New York City. We have found this gentleman uncommunicative with regard to his ancestors and his present residence. That night we led him to a quiet corner and attempted to quiz him. To no avail. His ancestors were English? "Some of them," he replied. "But I have Scotch blood, too; in fact", and he tossed his lace ruffles proudly, "my great-grandmother was a Stuart. French, also, a dash of Spanish, and a good deal of Irish." As much as this egotistical young man seemed to enjoy talking of his peregrinations among the literary folk, we could get no further information from him as to himself. However, Herb Roth was present, and he made an admirable likeness. Probably HE will never issue from retirement and anonymity again. So gentle reader, look ye well and ponder.

Elizabeth P. Milbank of the Missouri Writers' Guild tells us of Mark Twain's first home:

"In Monroe County, Missouri, where a road widens to make the little town of Florida, stands the monument erected to Mark Twain by the State of Missouri. Florida is a one-bank, one-store, one-man town, picturesquely situated on Salt River—Salt River which, in the dreams of the settlers of 1840-50, was to be 'widened and deepened and straightened that boats might come up from St. Louis and New Orleans', but which now is chiefly remembered as the 'old swimmin'-hole'.

"The 'oldest inhabitant' of the town points with pride to the inn where General—then Colonel—Grant spent a day and night during the Civil War, when out in search of bushwhackers, those irregular troops on the Confederate side engaged in guerrilla warfare. But what really keeps Florida on the map is the fact that here on November 30, 1835, Mark Twain was born.

"The 'one-man' of the town, M. A. Violette, as modest about it as his name implies, is the philanthropist who purchased the house in which Mark Twain was born, restored it to order, furnished it in the style of a century ago, and has the yard full of the flowers that our grandmothers loved. During the World's War, a Red Cross flag hung in the window. On it were two crosses, one for himself and one for Mark.

"It is not a mansion that first sheltered this Missouri genius, but a very humble, slab-shingled two room cottage. The floors are covered with 'hit and miss' rag carpet, which in turn is partially covered with braided rag rugs. The Declaration of Independence and Mark Twain's picture

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adorn the wall; a wooden mantel holds pewter basins, old brass candle sticks, and daguerreotypes; a muzzle-loading musket stands in one corner, and two spinning wheels—a small one for flax and a large one for wool—are in another. A corded bed, hand carved from sugar maple, spread with a blue and white woven coverlet, is flanked by splint-bottomed and Windsor chairs; a let-down-leaf table holds a candle mold, a grease lamp, and a Paul Revere lantern. A secretary and a glass-knobbed bureau are said to be one hundred fifty years old, and look their age.

"Florida is not on a railroad, but many automobile tourists stop at 'Mark Twain's House'. As one steps over the threshold of this shrine, there comes to him a sense of intimate association with the well beloved humorist, and a sudden hush of talk and laughter pays homage to Missouri's great writer, at whose feet fame laid her richest gifts and whose name is known throughout the world."

A "Sinclair Lewis of the paint brush", Charles Burchfield, is exhibiting some of his water colors at the Sunwise Turn bookshop. "Main Street" is the theme, — not Main Street, Gopher Prairie, but the Main Streets in little towns in Ohio. They are depressingly vivid, well done (for what he intends), and convincing. Need more be said? Mr. Burchfield was, we believe, born in one of the little towns he paints; or at least, in that general mise-en-scène. If any of his fellow townsfolk have happened to see these bitterly witty drawings of his, they cannot love him very well. But perhaps the particular people he paints in his sketches of streets, farms, railroad tracks, and country-side, would only observe that the drawings were "very like".

The work of "modernist" painters of all countries has been flooding New York recently. The Americans were represented in the Brooklyn Water Color Exhibit, which included the work of many types of artists, from John Sargent to John Marin (appropriately enough, a painter of marines, and the most distinguished of the newer group in America). Of the work of the younger French artists—Derain, Picasso, Signac and the rest—there has been an extraordinary number of exhibitions within the last week or so. And now, with the opening (March 2) of the exhibition at the Sculptors' Gallery, of the collection of modernist paintings belonging to John Quin, the English have entered the field. Apropos of the lending of the collection, Henry McBride remarks in the "Herald" that Mr. Quin is one of the first collectors of very modern work to publicly own up to his taste thus; Mr. McBride hopes he may lead the way for others. Certainly, whether or not one is fond of the extremest forms of modern art (and "for those who like that sort of thing, that is the sort of thing they like", as Max Beerbohm sagely remarks), credit is due to Mr. Quin for his independence. And, also, as it happens in this instance, for an interesting exhibition. It is true that the slightly egg shaped "Mother and Child" and the totally incomprehensible "Venus" by Jacob Epstein have, for us at least, no "message". But other work of Mr. Epstein's such as clever portrait heads, is of an entirely different sort. There are also a few really exquisite water colors and oil paintings by Gwen John, sister of Augustus John; who is himself represented by a portrait, some paint-

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ings, and a fine drawing or two. Others whose work is included are Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, Wyndham Lewis (a little too freakish for our, doubtless, old-fashioned taste), J. D. Innes, and Eric Gill.

It is interesting to observe that "cubism" and other more extreme "isms" are beginning to disappear. Apparently the younger artists meant them as a sort of gesture of revolt, and having "got away" with it, they seem contented to go on now with work that is no less new, modern in spirit, fresh, and unacademic, but which does not necessarily commit them to follow a blind alley of arbitrary freakishness.

Alabama gossip, from Katharine Hopkins Chapman:

"If 'a prophet is not without honor save in his own country' it would seem that poets put one over prophets, and that the honor increases in ratio to the distance of the country from home.

"For instance, when Emmett Kilpatrick, the American officer recently ransomed by Hoover's food from Bolsheviki prisons, was a young schoolmaster in Alabama, he thought and taught that his fellow Alabamian, Samuel Minturn Peck, author of 'Cap and Bells' and many poems in current issues of good magazines, was a very nice poet. But when Captain Kilpatrick, after serving in the A. E. F. and later as an interpreter at the Peace Conference in Paris, was stationed as a Red Cross officer in Lithuania, he chanced upon a travel-torn copy of "The Literary Digest"—one of those sent abroad at random, even as you and I sent them. He pounced upon it and devoured every legible word. But to him the choicest morsel was:

THE SECRET PACK
By Samuel Minturn Peck

My memory hath a secret pack
Wherein I store the loveliest things;
And in my heart, not on my back,
My dear and guarded treasure swings.
With every passing year it grows,
And as it grows life fairer gleams;
And lesser weigh my daily woes,
And brighter, rarer shine my dreams.

My memory hath a secret pack;
It steads me, cheers me all the while.
Within it enters nothing black,
But each kind word, each loving smile.
It matters not if darkness fall,
I never let my heart be dumb,
For love knows not until it call
What faithful echoes back will come.

My memory hath a secret pack;
When I am sad I open it
And soon of solace I've no lack,
And all my soul with joy is lit;
And over land and over sea,
My thought flies swifter than a dove,
For are not those who smiled on me
Still keeping bright the lamp of love?

"Captain Kilpatrick failed to memorize all of this or to clip it—possibly because bullets clipped fast and furiously near — but the gist of it persisted in his mind. Later, months later—which months, however, cold, starvation, and vermin made seem æons — when Kilpatrick would feel himself slipping into a slough of despond, feel body dissolving and mind about to shudder out, he would deliberately set himself to open his secret pack of lovely memories and beloved faces, and thus reinforce his hope that family and country were working for his release and rekindle his faith that they would ultimately succeed.

" 'And what else did you repeat in those cold, black dungeons?' I asked, anxious to learn what sticks in a cultured mind in such extremity.

" 'Oh, "The Merchant of Venice", and Portia's speech . . . and certain passages of the Bible,' diffidently. 'But do you know that little poem and where I can get it?'

"I did not, but I know Dr. Peck and I also know that so fine a tribute should be passed on to any author; therefore I wrote him of the incident.

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Dr. Peck replied immediately, enclosing two copies of the poem, which it happened he was using for his Christmas greeting this year. He wrote: 'No verse could serve a better purpose, nor go on a lovelier mission, than to cheer, as you tell me these did, a man in the position that Kilpatrick was. I often read of him during his imprisonment and rejoiced when he was set free, little dreaming that I had helped him in his despair. You recall the poem by Longfellow which begins somehow about "shooting an arrow into the air" and then goes on to speak of writing a song and finding it later in someone's heart. Though please do not think that I mean to place myself with Longfellow!'

"Aren't we Alabamians modest?"

Frank R. Arnold, of Logan, Utah, sends in an entertaining squib called "An Individual Ten Dollar Library". It occurs to us that it would be an amusing evening's speculation to figure out ten dollar libraries for the following: a sailor with a high school education setting out for a three years' voyage; a young American writer living in Honolulu who wants the best of this spring's books and has only that amount to spend; a professor of economics who has been sent to prison and needs a library; a salesgirl who wants to improve her mind; and a leader of the smart set who wants enough books to make her boudoir table look literary. We should much appreciate your advice as to these lists. Don't fail us. We don't want to be obliged to make them out ourselves. These are busy days. It is impossible to be in the places where gossip flies, and also to spend much of our time among the tomes of our study. We have a new study, by the way. It is quite small, but our family has lined it with books. Its purpose was to keep us at home where we could be observed. We haven't used it yet; but we shall! (Note that we do not use the "will" which means determination.) After all, what right has a gossip monger in a study? Recently we traced our ancestry directly to Pepys (via F. P. A.) and found that Boswell was also in the branches of the family tree, to say nothing of Benvenuto Cellini, who was our favorite relative. However, we have been a long time getting to Mr. Arnold. Perhaps, he, too, is a distant cousin. Who knows? Through Adam are all things probable.

If the school teacher in Mink Creek, Idaho, should write you enclosing a check for ten dollars, remarking that he liked the books you like, and asking you to spend it in books for him, what would you buy? That is what happened to me last summer and this is how I worked out the problem. In the first place I knew my man. He was a former student of mine at an agricultural college, an unmarried man, thirty years old, of Danish descent and keenly interested in Denmark and its people. He also stated that he was fond of poetry, but knew very little, and that he had always meant to read something of Howells, but had never done so. These were valuable leading strings in the choice of books. If he liked poetry "The Golden Treasury" was inevitable. Almost equally inevitable was the choice of "Silas Lapham", though I almost bought "A Modern Instance", a book which pleases me on rereading even more than "Silas Lapham". In deference to the Danish cells in his soul I bought Rider Haggard's "Rural Denmark", a book which is most astounding when you think of Haggard's reputation away from the farm, but a book which might have been done a thousand times better if it had been written by a Stevenson with agricultural training. But there ain't no such animal. So far my work was cut out for me. Next, to put the man up to date, I bought him the O. Henry short stories for 1920 and was sorely disappointed at their lack of O. Henry quality. I also selected "The Octopus" to send him as the best western novel I knew and one of the best that America has ever produced. *By this time I had spent $8.22 and I wrote to him* to ask whether he wanted the last dollar and a half spent on a new play, a book of essays, or a travel book. He wrote back to get travel. So I got the Everyman edition of Marco Polo because Mr. Wells says it is the beginning of American history, because I like it, and because I thought it might be helpful to a teacher of history in a country school. Here is a list of prices.

Rural Denmark	$2.00
Golden Treasury	1.50
Silas Lapham	.98
Short Stories	1.90
Octopus	1.00
Marco Polo	1.00
Postage	.96
	$9.34

Now comes the problem, what to do with the *remaining sixty-six cents.* Could I have invested ten dollars more profitably on books under these Idaho conditions?

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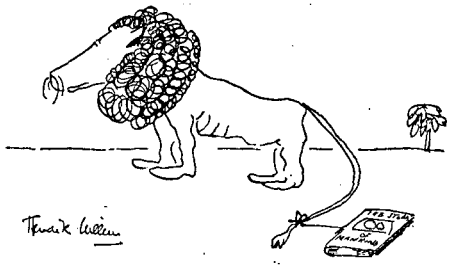
THE CHILDREN'S CORNER

Hendrik Willem Van Loon, the fat and jolly author of "The Story of Mankind", has sent us a sketch for



the Children's Corner. Isn't it funny?

PRIZE AWARDS FOR FEBRUARY

First prize, "Howard Pyle's Book of Pirates", goes to Edwin Hall (age fifteen) of Huntingdon, Tennessee, for his essay on "Alice Adams":

If Booth Tarkington were to write a book and label it "Sweetikins" I'd read it, in spite of the title, knowing that I would find it interesting. It was in this spirit that I read Alice Adams, and I was not disappointed.

Alice Adams is a book that can be read with interest by every member of the family. It holds a different message for each one. My young cousin (a girl) read it and cried; my brother and I read it and sympathized, wondered—but took warning; Mother and Dad read it and—*laughed*.

Tarkington, I believe, surpasses all living writers when it comes to realism, because he uses realism with reason. He knows just how much to tell and how much to leave to the imagination His characters never do ridiculous things in public in order to prove that life is real and life is earnest.

The five main characters in Alice Adams are drawn with such skill that they seem to be living people. There are other well drawn characters in the book but they serve merely as a background. Tarkington does not confuse his readers by bringing too many people into his book, therefore it is easy to read and easy to remember.

In Alice Adams Tarkington has written a book that is both life-like and charitable. He has not forgotten that when one is young troubles are very real, and, while he delights in exposing the heart of youth, he does so with sympathy and understanding.

So, despite the fact that I am a boy, I freely confess that the last book I read was Alice Adams. What do I think of it? Just this—that, while I impatiently await Tarkington's next book (which I hope will be about boys), I'm going to read Alice Adams *again!*

Second prize, "The Old Tobacco Shop", to Elsa Steinback (age ten) of Brooklyn, New York, for her paper on "The Last Book I Read and Why I Like It" (printed exactly as she wrote it):

The last book I read was entitled "Baldy of Nome". I love to read dog stories because I have a large Police dog and know their ways. I liked this story not only because I love all dogs but because it takes place in Alaska. In a National Geographic Magazine I read about the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes and ever after this have been very intrested in that country. The dog races are exiting to read and sometimes just as I was at a very interesting part my dog Rollie would come and put his head on my book as if to say, "You have no business to read and think about other dogs"! solong's I'm here.

It was pathetic to read in the beginning of the book how the boy thought he would have to sell his beloved dog. But Baldy is taken to a kennel where he is well taken care of and his young master becomes a daily visator.

The dogs live in a snow hut apart from their masters. They often go on long fishing trips to get fresh food for the other Eskimos. The sleds are made of bone and have to be cept out of reach of the dogs so they will not chew them up.

It was Baldy who often won the race for his team. He works himself up to leader of the team and he and the other dogs well deserve the title, "Immortals of the trail."

I look back with pleasure to the many lovely evenings I spent reading "Baldy of Nome," after my schoolwork was done and the fire was burning brightly making the room warm and cozy. Now and then Rollie would groan and strech himself.

The prizes for March essays will be announced in the May number. We are not offering further prizes. The reason for this is our conviction, after having read the contributions thus far submitted, that we should simply be making the children who write these opinions on books self-conscious with regard to their reading. These essays show the influence of parent and teacher rather than a spontaneous effort on the part of the child. We want to do everything humanly possible for the cause of good books for young people; and we fear that our contests are wrong psychologically. Personally, we were brought up on the "St. Nicholas League", and of this we approve. Here, in THE BOOKMAN, however, we do not feel that we can contribute anything new without creating a false sense of book values in the child mind.

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